■ Sports / A22

Court tells PBA: Let Asi Taulava play in Finals

■ News / A2

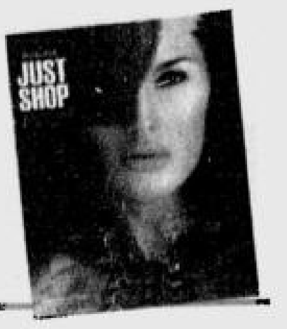
Missing OFW found dead in Riyadh hospital due to traffic accident

■ World / A8

37 die in deadliest day for US troops in Iraq

■ News / A2

First of GMA appointees goes thru Senate wringer



GMA 'classmate' wants old customs job back

ABA! ANO KA, SINE-SWERTE?

By Armand N. Nocum

IT APPEARS that the post is too good to give up for this "classmate."

A customs collector earlier suspended by Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo

GMA/ A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

CAP planholders demand their money back in full

By Dona Pazzibugan and Christine O. Avendaño

POLICY holders of the financially troubled pre-need company College Assurance Plan (CAP) want their full investment back.

"We won't agree to being left with nothing. We've worked hard to make our payments,"

CAP/ A7

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Friday, January 28, 2005 ★★ 78 pages 8 sections Vol. 20 No. 51 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Yahoo! Peso at 55.15:$1

Investors pour dollars into RP

By Doris C. Dumlao, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

"YAHOO!" President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday shouted upon learning that the peso appreciated for the fourth straight day against the US dollar, the latest indication that foreign and local investors were giving her administration a new vote of confidence.

"The economy is on a roll ... The sense of turnaround is setting in," Ms Arroyo said in Malacañang during the launching of the country's first private equity fund—the $25-million Planters Bank-Aureou equity fund for small and medium enterprises.

The peso finished at a fresh 12-month high on Thursday, hitting 55.13 before closing at 55.15 against the dollar on the Philippine Dealing System. It was the strongest finish for the local currency since Jan. 6, 2004 when it closed at 55.11.

The volume of transactions also rose to $326.8 million from $270 million on Wednesday—another strong sign that foreign investors were pouring in dollars into the country. Analysts see the peso stabilizing at the 54 level within the first quarter.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index—another barometer of business confidence—ended up 21.11 points, or 1.1 percent, higher at 1,991.39. The index is at its five-year peak.

What drove the local currency and stocks up was the news that foreign investors had scrambled to buy Philippine sovereign bonds this week after finding themselves underweight in the paper because a rating downgrade had turned out to be only one notch, not the two that many had feared.

The huge demand, with investors ordering more than five times the $1.5 billion on offer, en-

YAHOO/ A4

NO-VAT
PAHIRAP!
PARTY LIST

POLITICS MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: Representatives Satur Ocampo and Imee Marcos band together with other oppositors to the VAT, like Rep. Liza Masa (at right), among the 22 opposition congressmen, who walk out of the session hall of the Batasang Pambansa on Wednesday night. Ocampo was jailed by Ferdinand Marcos for a lengthy period during martial law until he escaped. REM ZAMORA

Joker digs in to block VAT

SEN. JOKER Arroyo yesterday declared that he would hold his ground against the passage in the Senate of the House-approved 2-percent increase in the value-added tax.

"That's what he says: He is not the Senate," Arroyo said in reaction to Senate President Franklin Drilon's expressed optimism that the measure would be supported by the administration bloc.

"There is a commitment by the majority in the Senate that we will pass the VAT," Drilon had said. But he stressed that they would "do everything" to pass a bill where "the poor sector of our society will not bear the brunt of these increases."

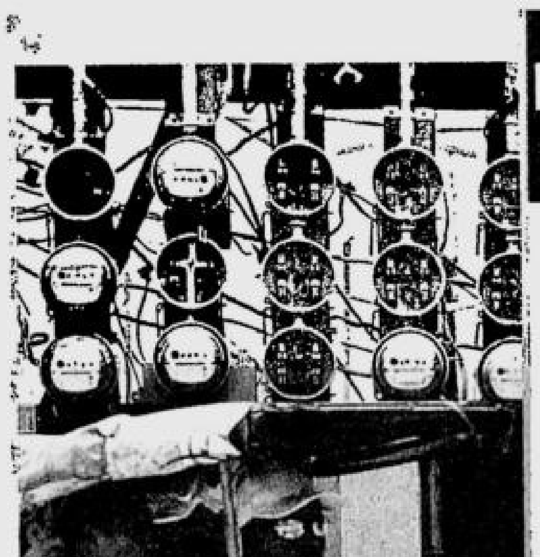
Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate ways and means committee, will start holding hearings on

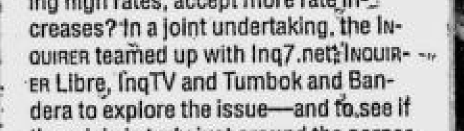
JOKER/ A17

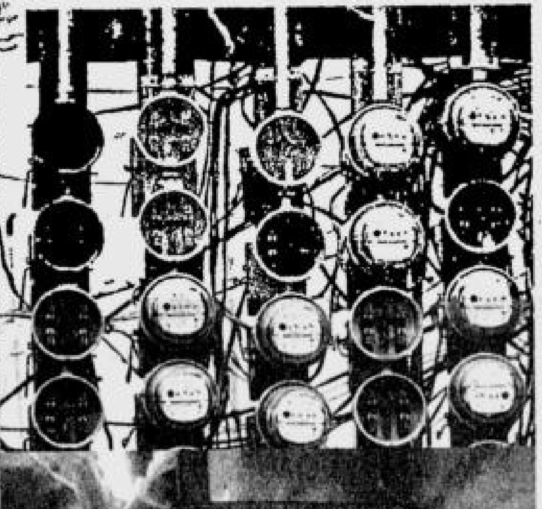
The Preventable Crisis

Editors' Note. In the words of the just-resigned energy secretary, 2005 is a "make or break year" for the electric power industry. This year, new capacity must be built for Mindanao, 70 percent of Napocor must be privatized, and electricity rates must be raised to reflect true costs again. If not, then a power crisis will be upon us.

In many ways, the key issue is public reception. Will the public, already paying high rates, accept more rate increases? In a joint undertaking, the INQUIRER teamed up with Inq7.net, INQUIRER Libre, InqTV and Tumbok and Bandera to explore the issue—and to see if the crisis is truly just around the corner.







In Inquirer Libre:
Bataan Nuclear Power Plant: Solusyong naunsyame

In InqTV on ABC, at 7:30 am:
Singil sa kuryente: Dapat bang taasan?

On Inq7.net/power:
Archive of stories and documents

Noodles go up to P5.35, and other 'slight' hikes

By Volt Contreras and Norman Bordadora

THE PRICE of a small can of sardines will rise from P10.30 to P10.49, a pack of instant noodles from P5.25 to P5.35, and cooking oil in 250-ml containers, from P19 to P19.35.

And "texters," get this: A prepaid card going for P300 will now cost P305.45.

If you deem these increases "slight," then you agree with Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, who yesterday sought to allay fears that a 12-percent value-added tax on goods and services would send prices of basic commodities through the roof.

Soliman conceded that "yes, there will be an effect" on the prices of goods, including those on the poor man's grocery list.

"But the increase on these products will just be slight," she told the INQUIRER.

Soliman said any price increase ensuing from the expanded VAT bill would be "felt more" on goods and services patronized mostly by the middle- and upper-income classes.

These include "hotdogs or pancakes, clothing and shoes, and eating out in restaurants," she said.

Soliman said her department was among the agencies now "crunching the numbers that will demonstrate" to the public the expected benefits of having the VAT jacked up by 2 percent.

NOODLES/ A17

Mining new buzzword; $6B expected to flow in

SITTING in front of a Chinese good luck symbol and a painting of sinewy miners, Felipe Yap sees a golden future after years of frustration.

Since the Supreme Court laid out the welcome mat for foreign investors in the moribund Philippine mining sector last month, shares in Yap's Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co., the country's biggest listed mining firm, have doubled.

With the government expecting $6 billion to flow into the industry, the ruling could spell fortunes for its handful of mining firms and debt-ridden economy.

But the Philippines must avoid past mistakes to attract enough investment to tap mineral wealth estimated at $1 trillion—12 times its annual gross domestic product and dwarfing the government's $65-billion debt.

"The story of the Philippine copper industry is a pretty sorry one. It's producing a fraction of what it did 20 years ago," said Tony Warwick-Ching, a London-based metals analyst with CRU International.

The Philippines was the world's fifth-biggest gold and ninth-biggest copper producer in 1980, before inefficiency, lack of funding and a series of environmental disasters left it trailing emerging mining powers such as Indonesia and Chile.

"Unfortunately, in the last 20 years or so, when we were lagging in the mining industry, we never had a chance to be part of the technological advances in mining," Yap said.

Now mining is back. Metals are trading at their highest in a decade as demand from China stretches world supplies. Copper, for example, rose 35 percent in value last year to a 16-year peak.

A Philippine delegation returned from China last week, saying it had won investment pledges in nickel and other mining projects worth $1.3 billion. More globe-trotting is planned to South Africa, Canada and Singapore.

And a conference in Manila next week will try to lure investments in 23 major projects cover-

MINING/ A4

Why power rates are high, and will go higher

By John Nery

SOONER or later, a public already burdened with expensive electricity must come face to face with a painful paradox: Today's prices are high because they do not reflect what the industry calls the true costs of power. But if they do, they will rise even higher.

It is the government's fervent wish, the fundamental assumption behind its energy plan, that the rise will be only temporary.

"I would say that our end goal is to bring about competitive prices," Raphael Lotilla, the incoming energy secretary, told the INQUIRER and InqTV. "But before we can reach that end goal, we must correct certain distortions in the prices. And if those distortions are being corrected [we] may see increases in the prices in the short term because ... we are trying to reflect the true cost of power."

In the Visayas, for instance, the National Power Corp.'s generation charge is P3.0374 per kilowatt-hour, the amount

WHY POWER/ A18

How PNP officer's family lives without electricity in the city

By Luige A. del Puerto

(Editor's note: The names of the characters in this article have been changed upon their request.)

IN A METROPOLIS obsessed with lights, a middle-class family has survived without electricity for the last three years.

Theirs is a story of adaptability and of contentment. Who would think that in a highly urbanized city like Pasay, a family

HOW/ A18

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers or thunderstorms becoming frequent over the Eastern and Southeastern Mindanao. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/28/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Frequent Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

AT THE SENATE

1st of new GMA team goes through wringer

By Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

THEY have not yet taken their seats but already the members of President Macapagal-Arroyo's new economic team have started feeling the heat.

Sen. Joker Arroyo branded the appointment of Raphael Lotilla as a "vacuum weight" and the new energy secretary as a "seat warmer."

Lotilla was grilled yesterday by members of the Joint Congressional Power Commission (JCPC) on the sale of the Masinloc coal-fired plant in Zambales, said to be the biggest asset and generating company of government, and got the most biting questions from Arroyo.

Energy officials last month awarded the plant to YNN Inc., a consortium of Filipino and Australian businessmen who were expected to pay $561 million or P31 billion to the government, most of it in installments over the next seven years.

At the hearing, Arroyo subjected Lotilla, the outgoing president of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) to questions on the financial standing of YNN.

Arroyo had earlier questioned the choice of YNN because the consortium only had a paid-up capital of P1 million and had no track record in power generation.

Like a toilet

Arroyo asked Lotilla if he had been to the YNN office in Paco, Manila. "It looks like a toilet," Arroyo said.

Arroyo then asked Lotilla if he had looked into the background and track record of the Australian partners of YNN.

Lotilla replied the Australians had a plant in China.

But Arroyo insisted the Australians had no track record in power generation. "You make use of your commercial attaches," he repeatedly told Lotilla, urging him to check on the Australian partners.

To reporters later, Arroyo said he personally visited the YNN office and found that it was sharing space with a janitorial service.

Before Arroyo, Lotilla was grilled by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who co-chairs the power commission with Rep. Cirilo Badelles.

Santiago asked Lotilla about rumors that somebody made money in the rush to award the Masinloc plant to YNN.

Huge commission

She said a 5-percent commission would have been big enough considering the plant cost over $500 million.

"We want to assure you that on the part of Psalm, we have lived up to the highest standards of governance," Lotilla answered.

Santiago also elicited from Lotilla the fact that the money the government would make from the sale of Masinloc was the same amount the government owed for putting up the plant.

"We sell the plant and we no longer have debts, but we don't have Masinloc anymore," Santiago said.

Santiago later told reporters the power commission was not about to give its blessings to the sale of Masinloc to YNN. "Not in a very long mile," she said.

Elaborating on what he meant by "vacuum weight," Arroyo told Senate reporters that Lotilla being named energy secretary was "*walang bigat, walang laman* (lightweight, hollow)."

'Let's see'

He said there much to be desired in Lotilla's performance as president of Psalm, which is handling the privatization of National Power Corp.

"You saw the way he answered, *paliguy-ligoy* (beating around the bush)," said Arroyo.

Asked if he would urge administration allies in the chamber to block Lotilla's confirmation, Arroyo said: "Let's see."

Santiago, for her part, said she would block Lotilla's confirmation "if he fails to prevent the (value-added) tax from being passed on to consumers."

"I'm okay with that. I'm happy that Senator Santiago said that," Arroyo said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said incoming customs chief Alberto Lina should divest himself of his ownership in certain business firms to avoid any "conflict of interest that may compromise the performance of his official duties."

Pimentel said Lina had listed in his biodata at least 12 corporations, including two involved in customs brokerage and others in air transportation and trading in which he was the chair and majority owner.

Real divestment

"That is really a matter for serious concern, because among other businesses, Mr. Lina is running Federal Express. Which means the first thing he should do is to divest himself of his business interests. And it should be real divestment," he said.

But he also pointed out that just because Lina was engaged in certain businesses, that should not automatically disqualify him from the customs post.

Senate President Franklin Drilon and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. were the only ones who appeared optimistic about the new appointments.

Magsaysay hoped the three appointees, including Juan Santos to the Department of Trade and Industry, would "infuse new energy and wealth of management experience into the bureaucracy."

"Their track record in the private sector should speak for their individual capabilities to handle these sensitive positions. The bottom line is applying time-tested principles in private enterprise that will uplift the quality of governance and reflect genuine public service," said the administration senator.

Gloria: Withdraw support to U.S. War of Aggression!!
a SHAM
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ELECTION PROTEST

Militants belonging to Migrante International portray US President George W. Bush as the devil as they rally on Kalaw Avenue near the US Embassy in Manila ahead of the Iraqi elections on Jan. 30. The group is also protesting what they call the American aggression on Iraq that was supported by President Macapagal-Arroyo under the now dissolved "coalition of the willing."

ERIK ARAZAS

Missing Filipino found dead in Riyadh hospital

By TJ Burgonio, Jerome Aning and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE TWO-WEEK-LONG search for a missing Filipino worker ended in a hospital morgue in Saudi Arabia last Wednesday.

Officials at the Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed yesterday that power technician Suelito C. Leong, who had been missing in Riyadh since Jan. 11, had been killed in a vehicular accident.

Leong died from body injuries at the Al Iman General Hospital in Riyadh on Jan. 12, a day after he was reported missing by his co-workers at the Detecon Al Saudia Co. Ltd. (Detasad), DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said.

The 40-year-old native of Negros Oriental figured in a car accident in Malaz on Jan. 11 and was brought to the hospital by the Saudi traffic police at around 1 p.m., Asuque said.

The circumstances of his death remained sketchy. Embassy officials tried to get details of the accident from the traffic police office in Malaz, but the officer handling the case had gone on leave for the Muslim religious pilgrimage, the Haj.

Because of this, Ambassador to Riyadh Bahnarim Guinomla had been instructed to coordinate with the Malaz traffic police office and ascertain the cause of Leong's death, Asuque said.

"We have to ensure that the person or persons responsible, if any, are held liable," he said.

Leong's co-workers reported to the embassy that he failed to come back after being sent out on a work-related assignment on Jan. 11, prompting embassy officials and the Riyadh police to mount a search.

His disappearance had fueled speculation that he had been abducted.

Leong's body, which was stored in the hospital's morgue, was identified by his Filipino co-workers Rogelio Berwaga, Isabelito Hernandez and Romeo Globio with the help of a Filipino nurse.

Acting Labor Secretary Manuel Imson said the breakthrough in finding Leong came on Wednesday night when an unidentified Filipino nurse tipped off the labor officials in Riyadh about a Filipino who recently died in their hospital.

"While we have finally come into locating Mr. Leong, it is very unfortunate that our efforts to find him had to end this way," Imson said. "We are very sorry for the family."

Imson assured Leong's wife Amalia that "necessary assistance would be provided to them since her husband was a registered member of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration."

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed her sympathy to the family of Leong through Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Bombs, bullets rain down on suspected Abu, JI meet

GOVERNMENT helicopter gunships and planes yesterday attacked a suspected meeting between leaders of the al-Qaida-affiliated Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah militant groups, the military said.

Among those suspected of being in the area in the Butilen Marsh in Datu Piang, Maguindanao, were the senior leaders of the Abu Sayyaf and a certain Dulmatin, an Indonesian alleged to have been behind the deadly Bali bombings in 2002.

The strikes were based on intelligence reports that the Abu Sayyaf was meeting with Indonesian members of the Jemaah Islamiyah network along with renegade members of the Muslim separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) who had broken a cease-fire with the government to attack an army outpost.

Among the Abu Sayyaf leaders reportedly in the area were its chief, Khadaffy Janjalani, and senior members Abu Soliman and Isnilon Hapilon, said Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, chief of the Southern Command.

Regional military spokesperson Col. Franklin del Prado said the targets were in a group of houses scattered in a forested marshy area on the outskirts of Datu Piang and Saudi Ampatuan towns.

Braganza said that among the JI members reported to be in the area was Dulmatin, "who figured in the Bali bombing."

Del Prado said Dulmatin was accompanied by two other Indonesians identified as Maruan and Mauyha, supposedly members of the Jemaah Islamiyah.

The Abu Sayyaf and JI members were meeting members of an MILF faction that overran a military outpost in the southern town of Mamasapano on Jan. 10, leaving about 21 soldiers and rebels dead, Braganza said.

The two MILF commanders, Abdul Rahman Binago and Abdul Wahid Tundok, led their men in attacking the army outpost without the sanction of the front's leadership but the rebels have refused to turn the two commanders over.

Braganza said MG 520 helicopter gunships and OV-10 attack planes, backed by artillery, were used because ground forces had difficulty entering the marshy area. Troops were assessing the effect of the strikes, Del Prado said. *With reports from AFP, Alcuin Papa and Julie Alipala, Mindanao Bureau*

Ombudsman probes jet-setting cop

By Christian V. Esguerra

THIS cop is sure to be the envy of his overworked fellow officers.

SPO1 Manuel Manio of the Central Police District had been in and out of the country many times since 1999, seeking no permission from his superiors. Worse, he might have even gotten paid.

The jet-setting Manio is now facing criminal and administrative charges before the Ombudsman for traveling without approved official leave either from the PNP or its policy-making body, the National Police Commission.

Manio's immediate superior, Insp. Arnold Santiago, was similarly under fire for failing to report his subordinate's real duty status.

Immigration records showed that Manio had been to the United States at least five times in the last four years, the Napolcom said in a statement.

The first trip came on Jan. 4, 1999, followed by another one on Jan. 3 and May 17, 2002, Jan. 30, 2003, and Jan. 29, 2004, the Napolcom learned from the Bureau of Immigration.

None of these trips apparently had been approved.

How Manio, a non-commissioned officer, could have paid for those trips was not the issue in the case filed with the Ombudsman.

The Napolcom found out about Manio's gallivanting only after Supt. Florante Leano, chief of the CPD District Human Research Doctrine Development, issued a memorandum on April 2, 2004 placing him on Awol.

Another former superior, Chief Supt. Roberto Calinisan, is under investigation for issuing two conflicting orders involving Manio.

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Japan stands firm on new policy

By TJ Burgonio

IT'S FINAL.

Japan won't budge on its new policy regulating entertainers who want to enter the country, an official of the Japanese Embassy in Manila said yesterday.

Masaru Watanabe, minister for general affairs of the embassy, said: "The Cabinet of Japan has approved a series of action plans combating the trafficking of persons. That was decided; that's final," dashing Philippine hopes a moratorium could have been worked out on its implementation.

"As soon as possible," Watanabe said when asked when the new rule would take effect.

Under the rule, Filipino entertainers wishing to work in Japan must present proof of two years' training or experience in a country other than Japan before they would be given visas.

At present, the rules merely require the submission of an artist's accreditation card (AAC), a government document certifying the holder's skills in music or dance.

Watanabe said Filipinos had no reason to worry about the policy as long as they had "genuine talent" or were in Japan legally.

"If a lady has full experience or training as an entertainer, there's no problem with her entering Japan. Genuine entertainers are most welcome. Those who can't come to Japan are those who don't have talent or training or experience," he said.

The new immigration rule, he pointed out, hews closely to the policies of the Philippines, which enacted an antitrafficking law in 2003 and has been sponsoring antitrafficking resolutions in the United Nations for the past several years.

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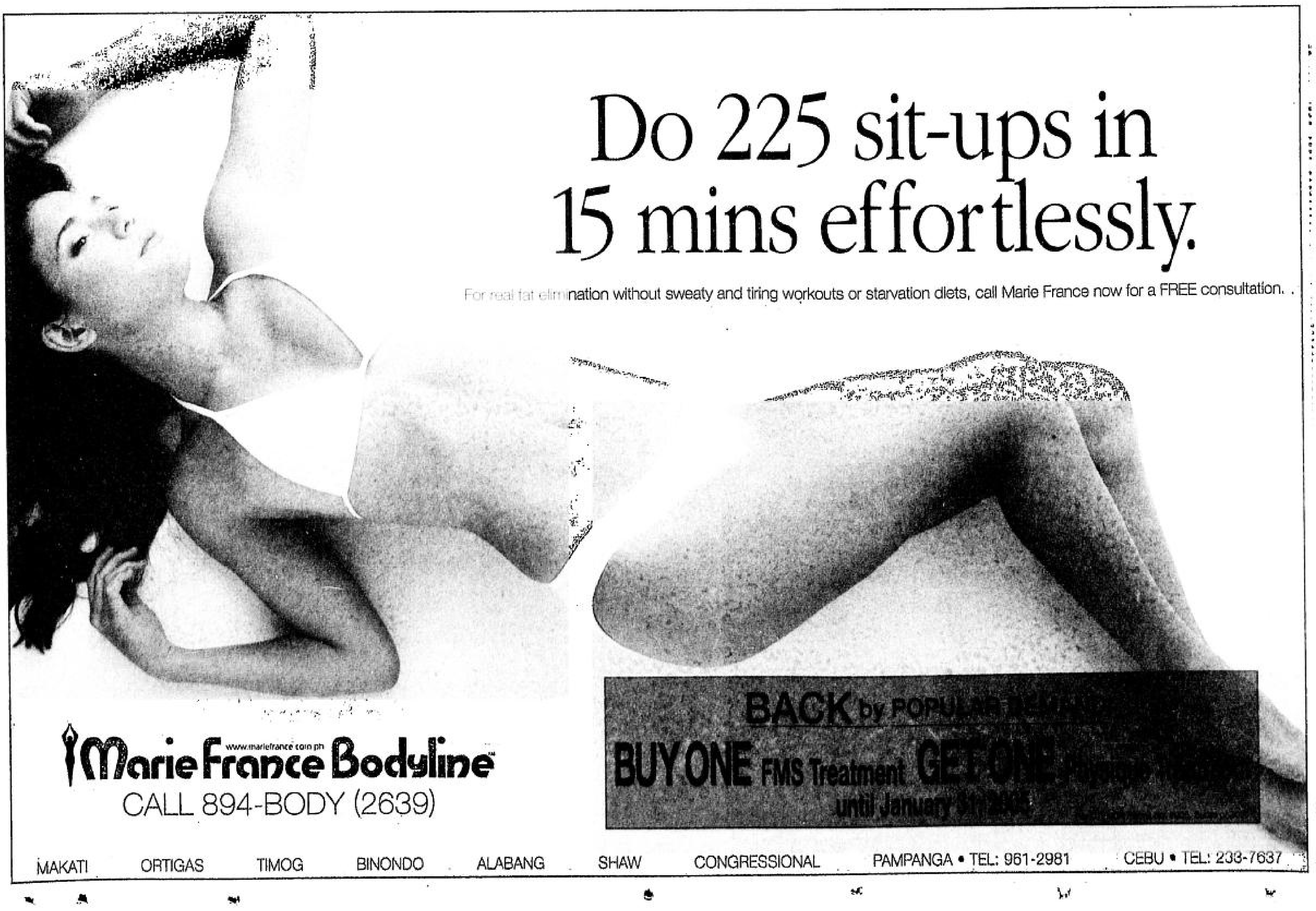

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Yahoo! Peso at 55.15:$1

From page A1

abled the Philippine government to price its largest single sovereign deal and spurred strong demand in the secondary market for the country's paper. The government had originally aimed for a $1-billion bond float.

The Philippines, Asia's most active sovereign bond issuer outside of Japan, priced the 25-year bond on Wednesday at a yield of 9.70 percent.

'Doing something right'

The bond sale came a week after international credit ratings agency Standard & Poor's downgraded the country's foreign-currency rating by one notch to BB-minus, citing a lack of urgency by the government in tackling potentially painful fiscal reforms.

Reuters quoted a source familiar with the bond offering as saying that investors viewed the Philippines as having navigated the worst of its difficulties, with the domestic economy performing well and rating agencies a little behind the curve.

"We must be doing something very right to get this kind of response from the international financial community," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, who had been kept busy lately containing the negative impact of S&P's downgrade.

More positive news

Stock traders said investors were also cheering the government's swiftness in implementing fiscal reforms to address a yawning budget deficit and Ms Arroyo's appointment of three new members to her team of economic managers.

Shortly before dawn Thursday, the House of Representatives approved a measure raising the value-added tax on goods and services to 12 percent from 10 percent. A similar bill must be approved by the Senate before it is signed into law.

Earlier, Ms Arroyo signed the Lateral Attrition Act of 2005—a reward-and-penalty system to improve tax collection—and another bill that raised taxes on tobacco and liquor products. The three laws are part of her administration's fiscal reform package.

Stock traders said investors were also upbeat over the corporate earnings outlook this year and the peso's rise against the dollar.

"There are strong [dollar] inflows and favorable reaction to positive news coming from the passage of the VAT bill and [Ms Arroyo's] appointment of new economic managers bring new hope," said Roland Avante, treasurer of Chinatrust Commercial Bank Philippines.

Proceeds from SMC's borrowing

Avante said investors were pouring dollars into the fixed-income market, particularly government securities. Aside from the government bond float, proceeds from the $1.85-billion new borrowing announced by food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. are likewise expected to boost the dollar supply in the Philippine Dealing System, adding fuel to the peso's strong rally.

Were it not for some intermittent dollar-buying, Avante said the peso would have easily breached the 55:$1 barrier and started trading at the 54-level.

Jose Emmanuel Hilado, president of foreign exchange association ACI Philippines and treasurer of BDO Private Bank, said the peso's appreciation to 54:$1 could happen any time—"not immediately but probably within the first quarter."

Round of applause

At the launching of the private equity fund for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), Ms Arroyo drew a round of applause from the crowd of bankers, investors and Cabinet officials, including the new appointees—Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Trade Secretary Juan Santos and Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina.

She said the country's economic fundamentals remained sound, citing the country's trade surplus of $333 million last November compared to the $193-million deficit during the same period in 2003.

"We must now bring the benefits of this macro-economic performance to the average Filipino," Ms Arroyo said. One way, she said, is to support the growth of SMEs.

"Small and medium entrepreneurs have proven the capacity to turn their capital around in the shortest period of time and create jobs," she said. "This private equity fund complements the government's training programs on trade and entrepreneurship, skills development and product design."

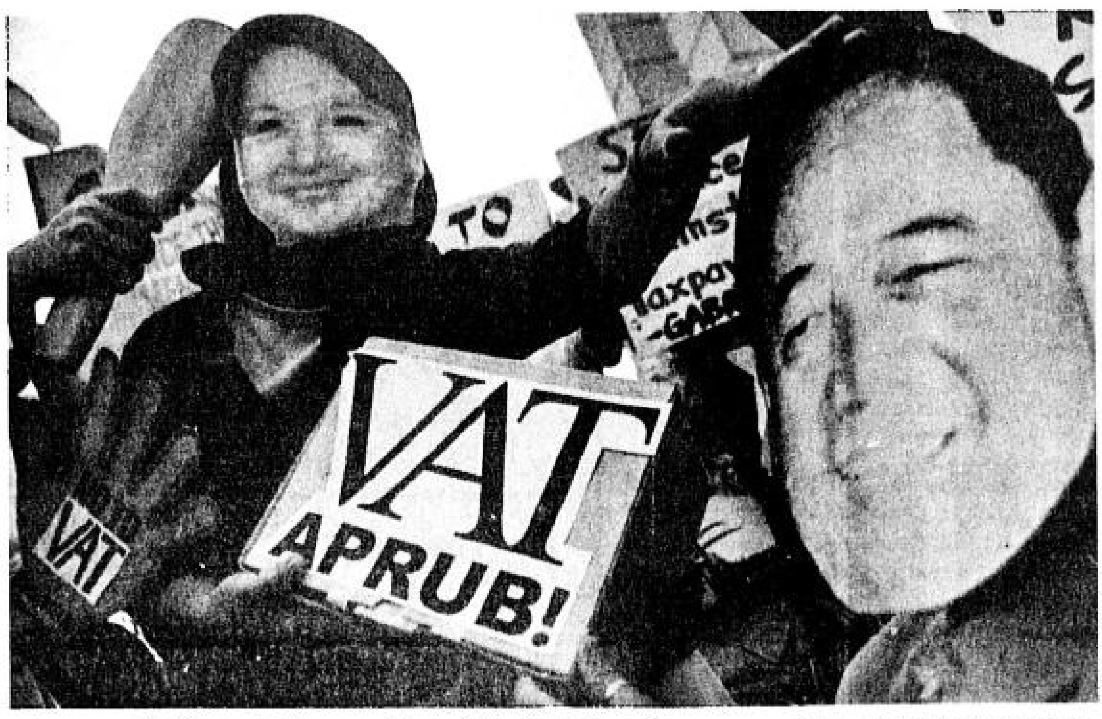
The Philippines' budget deficit is expected to narrow slightly to P180 billion, or 3.5 percent of gross domestic product this year, from P186.1 billion, or 3.9 percent of GDP in 2004, due to higher fees and charges by state agencies.

US and European buyers took 35 percent each of the Philippine government's bond float. Singapore investors accounted for 16 percent, Philippine clients took 10 percent and the remainder went to Hong Kong customers. By investor type, asset managers accounted for 74 percent, banks 13 percent, insurance companies 4 percent and retails 9 percent.

Citigroup, Deutsche Bank and UBS were the joint bookrunners on the deal.

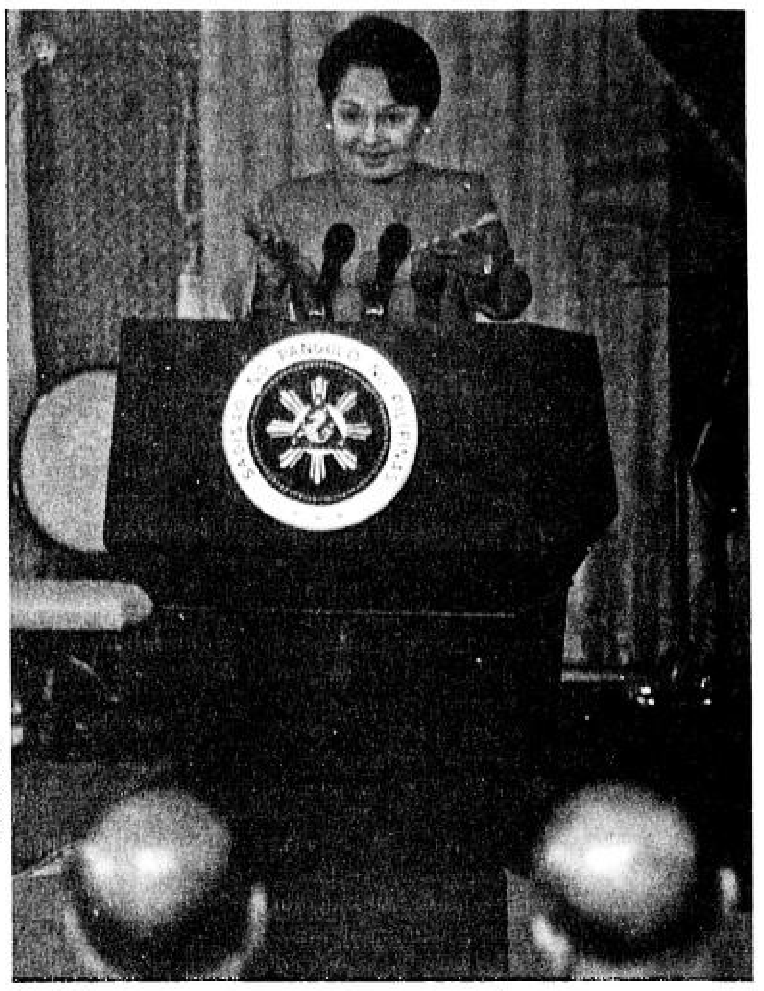
The government plans to borrow another $3 billion this year to finance its budget deficit and support the operations of ailing National Power Corp.

With reports from AP and Reuters



REM ZAMORA

ANTI-VAT protests are now out in the streets in full force, as promised, by militant groups after the Thursday dawn passage of the House bill increasing VAT by 2 percent.



SHINING moment: The economy is on a roll, exults President Arroyo during her speech at the launch of the Planters Bank-Aureos SME equity fund at the Palace on Wednesday night. Back to camera are incoming Trade Secretary Juan Santos (left) and Senior Presidential Adviser for International Competitiveness Roberto Romulo. EDWIN BACASMAS

FACTBOX

Mining booming

PHILIPPINE mining shares have risen sharply in the wake of a Supreme Court ruling that reignited interest in the country's long-dormant mining sector.

Here are details on the main mining firms that have B-shares open to foreign investors.

Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company

- The country's largest mining firm with a market capitalization of $197 million.
- Metal sales reached P1.7 billion ($30.6 million) in the first nine months of 2004, mainly gold and silver from its two Victoria mines in Benguet.
- Had a net loss of P183 million in 2003 but a profit of P19.2 million in the first nine months of 2004.
- Secured a $3-million loan in December from Canada's Ivanhoe Mines Ltd. in exchange for giving Ivanhoe first negotiation rights on future projects, likely to include a new copper mine.
- B-share price has doubled to P0.56 from P0.28 on Dec. 1, the day of the Supreme Court ruling.

Philex Mining Corp.

- Has one major operational site, the Padcal copper mine in Benguet.
- Major gold/copper find being studied at site in Surigao del Norte under joint venture with Anglo American. Philex said it had total copper and gold resources of 2.3 million ounces as of December 2003.
- Net loss rose to P133.6 million in the first nine months of 2004 from P40.2 million a year earlier.
- B-shares have more than tripled to P1.74 from P0.51 on Dec 1.

Manila Mining

- An affiliate of Lepanto, it has had no operational mines since 2001.
- Sees promise in its Kalayaan site in Surigao del Norte adjacent to the Philex/Anglo American project.
- Net loss rose to P70 million in the first nine months of 2004 from P1 million a year earlier.
- B-shares have risen 55 percent to P0.037 since Dec. 1.

Benguet Corp

- Was the country's biggest gold mining firm and the 16th biggest in the world in the 1980s.
- Looking for investment partners for a copper, gold and silver project in southern Davao del Norte.
- The project is seen yielding 2 billion pounds of copper concentrate, 466 million pounds of copper cathode, 4 million ounces of gold and 4 million ounces of silver with an estimated total value of $4 billion.
- Its mining revenues reached P100 million in the first nine months of last year. Had a net loss of P185 million in that period, down from P200 million a year earlier.
- B-shares have risen about 50 percent to P6 since Dec. 1.

Apex Mining Corp.

- Mining operations suspended since 2000.
- Has started rehabilitating facilities at its Masara gold claim in southern Mindanao.
- Narrowed net loss to P8.7 million in first nine months of 2004 from P21.8 million a year earlier.
- Shares have more than doubled to P0.7 since Dec. 1. ($=P55.5)

Reuters

Mining new buzzword . . .

From page A1

ing gold, nickel, copper and bauxite.

Decline, stagnation

Mining in the Philippines accounted for 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and almost 20 percent of exports in the early 1980s. By 2001, it was just one percent of GDP and barely 2 percent of exports.

Government geologists estimate onshore seams of gold, copper and other minerals cover about 9 million hectares. The government estimated potential copper ore resources at 1.44 billion tons, gold ore at 795 million tons and nickel ore at 534 million tons in 2002, making it potentially the world's fifth-biggest mineral producer.

But the country's annual mineral exports have stagnated at around $500 million. That's less than half of Chile's mining exports of $1.3 billion in November alone.

Checkered history

A string of environmental disasters and clashes with local communities tainted the industry in the 1990s, leading to a 2004 ruling by the Supreme Court declaring that the 1995 Mining Act, drawn up in an attempt to revive the sector, went against constitutional limits on foreign ownership.

The court reversed its ruling last December, clearing the way for foreign firms to own 100 percent of local projects.

But foreign investors may prove to be not that keen in investing in a country with a checkered history of mining disasters, corruption and rebel insurgencies.

"They probably have appreciable reserves, but the grades aren't that good," said CRU's Warwick-Ching. "I'm not sure that the Philippines is seen as being an area where there is tremendous potential, compared with places like Chile and Peru."

Low grades mean that more ore must be extracted—at higher cost—for the same amount of metal.

Bad memories

Many critics in the Philippines, including the powerful Catholic Church, are skeptical of government and industry assurances that they have learned their lessons.

Memories are still fresh of the country's worst industrial accident in 1996 when a torrent of sulphuric tailings accidentally leaked into two rivers at the Marcopper mine site in Marinduque. Residents filed a P50-billion ($904-million) class action lawsuit against former Marcopper shareholder Placer Dome Inc..

Such accidents, corruption and rebels won't deter foreign investors, though, according to Peter Wallace, who runs a business consultancy in Manila.

"They will come to the Philippines because it's a rich country and they can't ignore it," Wallace said.

Hot commodity

Indeed, Japan's Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd. started tests last year at the Coral Bay nickel plant in Palawan with local partner Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp. Mitsui and Co. and Sojitz Corp. are also investors.

Philippine mining firms have become a hot commodity.

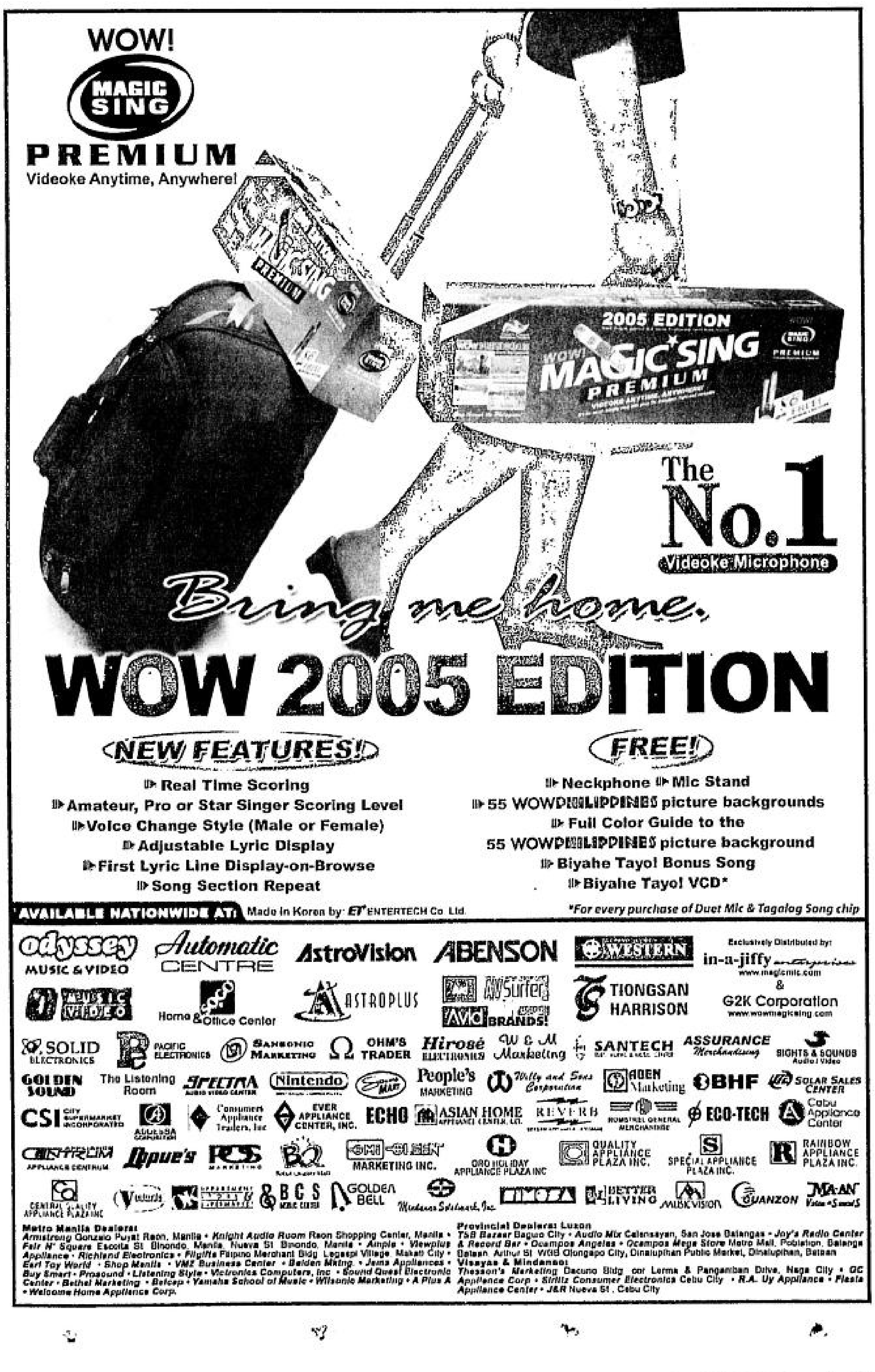
Shares of Lepanto, Benguet Corp. and Philex Mining Corp. have surged in the month since the ruling, despite there being no concrete sign of when they will be able to dig themselves out of losses. The so-called penny stocks don't interest bigger players and analysts have virtually ignored them for years.

Showcase

Still, Lepanto, which has two operational gold and silver mines in Benguet province, secured a $3-million loan from Canada's Ivanhoe Mines Ltd. soon after the ruling.

"We want to be the showcase for mining," Yap said.

Reuters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4 suspected rebels killed near Luisita

VICTORIA, Tarlac—Four suspected New People's Army rebels were killed while four others were arrested after a brief clash with government soldiers in Barangay Bantog here the other day, the military said yesterday.

Military spokesperson Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said the gunfight took place Wednesday afternoon in Victoria town, some 8 km north of Hacienda Luisita. The communist rebels attacked an Army patrol, triggering a gun battle.

Authorities identified two of the fatalities as Felino Briones of this town and Alan Batan of Tarlac City. None of the soldiers were hurt, the military said.

Arrested were Rudy Naungayaw, 36; Jhonnoe Briones, 29, and his son, Dexter Briones, 14, all of Barangay Bantog.

Another suspected rebel, who was wounded during the encounter, was arrested at dawn Thursday and was taken to an undisclosed hospital, according to Capt. Ruel Rombaoa, spokesperson of the Army's 7th Infantry Division based at Fort Magsaysay.

"They came from Hacienda Luisita and they were here to rest. Their presence here only proves that the striking workers in Luisita have been infiltrated by the NPA," Rombaoa said. The three suspects, however, said they were farmers and not rebels. *Russell Arador, Jo Martinez-Clemente, Ronald Dizon and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 28, 2005
3rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 10:32-39
Gospel: Mark 4:26-34

Jesus also said, "In the kingdom of God it is like this. A man scatters seed upon the soil. Whether he is asleep or awake, be it day or night, the seed sprouts and grows, he knows not how. The soil produces of itself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when it is ripe for harvesting they take the sickle for the cutting: the time for harvest has come."

Jesus also said, "What is the kingdom of God like? To what shall we compare it? It is like a mustard seed which, when sown, is the smallest of all the seeds scattered upon the soil. But once sown, it grows up and becomes the largest of the plants in the garden and even grows branches so big that the birds of the air can take shelter in its shade."

Jesus used many such stories or parables, to proclaim the word to them in a way they would be able to understand. He would not teach them without parables; but privately to his disciples he explained everything.

Commentary

Jesus paints another scene: a man scattering seed on soil and once it's sown, whether he sleeps or watches it, it sprouts and grows until ripe for the harvest. Or a mustard seed, so tiny yet it grows into a weed, a bush with branches that supports the birds of the air, giving them shelter. These are parables, stories with a twist that Jesus uses to teach his disciples what he is doing in the world and what they are to do in time. This Word that is both message and the person of Jesus is potent, far-ranging in power and effect, and it becomes something that nurtures others and protects and shelters the small of the earth—the doves, pigeons, blackbirds, the majority of birds that most would think of as a nuisance or expendable.

Thomas Aquinas, known for his wisdom and intelligence saw himself as a "dumb ox." He wrote theology and treaties on God but knew that nothing he could say would compare to Jesus' stories, presence and person who transformed those who were in misery to people of hope, as the children of God. What are our words and lives saying to the most desperate of the earth?

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CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS)/REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—A compromise is a contract whereby the parties, by making reciprocal concessions, avoid a litigation or put an end to one already commenced. It is an agreement between two or more persons, who, for preventing or putting an end to a lawsuit,, adjust their difficulties by mutual consent in the manner which they agree on, and which everyone of them prefers in the hope of gaining, balanced by the danger of losing. The general rule is that a compromise has upon the parties the effect and authority of res judicata, with respect to the matter definitely stated therein, or which by implication from its terms should be deemed to have been included therein. This holds true even if the agreement has not been judicially approved. Applying existing jurisprudence, the compromise agreement as a consensual contract became binding between the parties upon its execution and not upon its court approval. From the time a compromise is validly entered into, it becomes the source of the rights and obligations of the parties thereto. The purpose of the compromise is precisely to replace and terminate controverted claims. [Citations omitted.] [First Division, Justice Quisumbing, Santos Ventura Hocorma Foundation, Inc. vs Santos, G.R. No. 153004, November 4, 2004]

BY R. B. VERA

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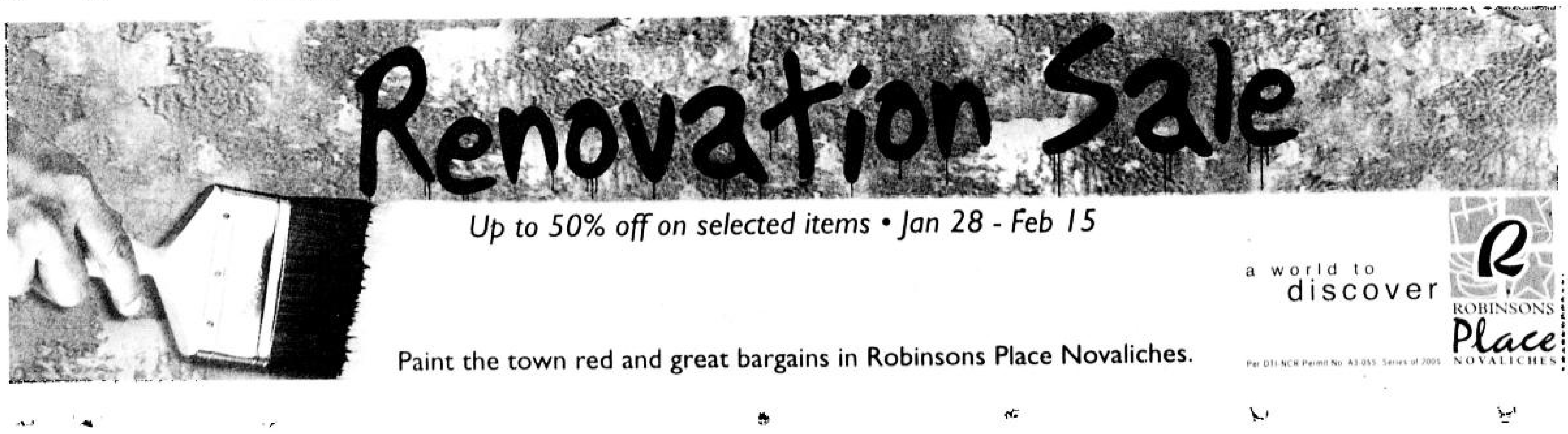

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Poverty top issue at World Economic Forum

By Isagani Yambot
Publisher

DAVOS, Switzerland—The problem of poverty tops the agenda of this year's annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in this resort town.

About 700 leaders chose six "tough issues" as top priorities for the Forum's agenda at a Global Town Hall meeting on Wednesday.

The six top issues and the votes they got:

1. Poverty – 64.4 percent
2. Equitable globalization – 54.9 percent
3. Climate change – 51.2 percent
4. Education – 43.9 percent
5. The Middle East – 43.7 percent
6. Global governance – 43.2 percent

Participants in the annual meeting will discuss and develop action agendas on the six priorities in the next three days.

Among the reasons the participants in the Global Town Hall gave for their vote were:

1. Poverty—The link between all social issues: fundamental to everything; reducing poverty will reduce terrorism and instability; poverty is ethically unacceptable; action is required urgently.

2. Equitable globalization—Fastest way to fair distribution of wealth and surest track to peace; leads to wider representation through democratic decision-making; best way to improve the state of the world.

3. Climate change—Global in scope and impact; potentially irreversible; "if we don't fix it, nothing else matters"; "an achievable challenge."

4. Education—Essential to solving problems of the first three priorities; women's education is key; science and technology skills are important for sustained development; "education is the key to success for poor countries."

5. Middle East—The lynchpin for global security; "the Arab-Israeli conflict is an easy excuse for leaders not to make wider reforms"; perception that the West and Israel are biased against the Muslim world"; population is poor, uneducated and oppressed.

6. Global governance—Opportunity for multilateral decision-making; "global leadership, not world government"; adaptive structure needed to manage globalization and interdependence. Good structure will lead to effective responses to crises and opportunities.

Of the Global Town Hall participants, 66 percent were male and 34 percent female. Twelve percent were in the 20 to 39 age group; 28 percent, 40 to 49; 41 percent, 50-59; 20 percent, 60 or older.

Thirty-five percent were from Europe; 35 percent, North America; 15 percent, Asia-Pacific; 8 percent, Middle East; 4 percent, Latin America, and 4 percent, Africa.

Fifty percent were from business; 9 percent, the academe; 9 percent, media; 8 percent, non-government organizations; 6 percent, government; 4 percent, science and medicine; 3 percent, the arts; 1 percent, religion, and 10 percent, other sectors.

Ged Davis, managing director of the Centre for Strategic Insight, said, "Taking responsibility for tough choices is not just a throwaway line but one that we hope will lead to clear definitive action at the end."

Carolyn Lukensmeyere, president of AmericaSpeaks, said the group had a very unique opportunity in Davos "not only to identify the key issues but also to determine the key challenges within these issues."

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Joma says move to have him deported 'useless'

LUCENA CITY—Self-exiled Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Ma. Sison yesterday branded the attempt of government officials to lobby for his deportation from the Netherlands as "useless and counterproductive."

"The Europe tour of Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles and Presidential Chief of Staff Norberto Gonzales is useless and counterproductive if the objective is to force my return to the Philippines," said Sison in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER.

The Philippine officials are on a six-day trip to Norway, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands to try to convince the Dutch government that it is safe to send Sison home despite his application for asylum.

Romulo had said in a statement that Sison did not have to fear political persecution in the Philippines.

In 1987, following the assassination of several leading figures in the leftist movement in the Philippines, Sison went into political exile.

Sison said that not even the Dutch government or the European Union could force him to return to the Philippines.

"As a recognized political refugee, I am protected by the Refugee Convention and by Article 3 and the entirety of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms," he said.

On Aug. 9, 2002, the US state department listed the CPP and its military wing, the New People's Army, as "foreign terrorist organizations."

Three days later, the US treasury department also listed Sison as a "terrorist" whose assets must be frozen.

On Oct. 28, 2002, the European Union followed suit and placed Sison and the NPA in its list of terrorist persons, groups and entities.

Peace talks brokered by Norway since 2003 stalled last August when the Arroyo administration refused to seek Sison's removal from the US terrorist list.

Sison, who serves as the NDF's chief political consultant in the peace talks, said the communists are ready to return to the negotiating table as soon as the government undertakes measures to have them stricken off the terrorist lists. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Alcuin Papa and LA Ferriols, Manila*

Suspected Abu financier leaves RP

A SAUDI Arabian national suspected of financing the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf terrorist group left the country Wednesday after he opted for self-deportation, according to the Bureau of Immigration.

Muhammad Abdullah Ssughayer boarded a Saudi Airways flight to Jeddah, Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez said. He was accompanied by a diplomat from the Saudi Embassy in Manila.

Ssughayer's departure was approved by the immigration board of commissioners and was cleared by the courts, the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police.

Ssughayer was nabbed on Jan. 17 at the Zamboanga airport by immigration agents minutes after arriving on a Philippine Airlines flight from Manila. Ssughayer arrived from Indonesia the day before he was arrested.

Ssughayer has been on the immigration watch list of suspected foreign terrorists since March last year. Intelligence reports said he was a financier of the widow and son of slain Abu Sayyaf leader Abdulrajak Janjalani.

He was also positively identified by detained Abu Sayyaf member Non Muhammad Umug as the contact person of local terrorist leaders, including Janjalani's successor and brother, Khaddafy. The Saudi national allegedly extended financial support to the group and its members, he said. *Jerome Aning and Nikko Dizon*

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3 Senate committees to investigate CAP

By Christine O. Avendaño

DON'T buy pre-need insurance plans from the cash-strapped College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) or continue paying for existing policies, two senators urged the public yesterday.

Three Senate committees—banks, trade and commerce, and accounts—are set to hold hearings on the financial woes of CAP, which has more than 780,000 plan holders.

The inquiry came as a result of the privilege speech delivered the other night by opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, who noted that Senate employees had purchased health insurance from CAP.

Osmeña said CAP should not be allowed to continue selling plans or to collect on existing plans given its shaky financial situation.

He quoted a report that showed that CAP's deficit on its actuarial reserve liability amounted to P18 billion last year. Its debts reached P25 billion, but its assets were only valued at P7 billion to P8 billion.

"That's why CAP is having a difficult time...That's a bankrupt company and I don't think they should be allowed to continue selling plans or continue to collect existing plans," he said.

Osmeña said there should be a proper liquidation of CAP "in order to serve the interest of the public."

Asked how those with existing plans could be reimbursed, Osmeña said there was no special government fund to help them.

"The only way out I can see at this time under existing law is the proper, orderly liquidation," Osmeña said.

He said the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) should have either warned the public two years ago about CAP's financial situation or suspended its license.

Osmeña revealed that a month ago, SEC officials said that "they were under political pressure to allow CAP to continue."

"And this to me is a crime because then 700,000 families who do not have hope of getting paid 10 years from today . . . will be still somehow enticed into investing hard-earned money into the plans," he said.

He said people should not pay for the CAP plans, noting that it was "like throwing good money out."

Sen. Mar Roxas also urged the public not to pay for CAP plans given the financial problems of the firm.

Roxas urged the SEC to make public the results of two recent investigations it conducted to determine CAP's financial condition.

JESS YUSON

THUMBS down for the College Assurance Plan from Senators Mar Roxas and Serge Osmeña who are set to investigate the financial woes of the pre-need company.

CAP planholders demand the full amount they're entitled to get

From page A1

said Deo Genito, a government employee.

He and his wife Salome, a fellow government employee, took out educational policies for their two children when they were still infants. They paid the policies for five years.

"We really prioritized their education. We wanted to be assured that they could go to college. We anticipated that by the time they go to college, tuition would be expensive," Deo said.

Now their eldest son is about to enter college next year. Their youngest daughter will enter college in three years' time.

The Genitos are among the hundreds of thousands of parents who now seriously worry about their children's college education because CAP has acknowledged it does not have the funds to cover all the maturing policies.

Bouncing checks

Universities had stopped taking checks issued by CAP to cover the tuition of their policy holders since late last year when the checks started to bounce.

The University of the Philippines and the Philippine Christian University (PCU) said they were requiring the CAP "scholars" to pay their tuition in cash first and later have CAP reimburse them for what they had paid.

"CAP's checks have bounced," said a staffer at the PCU Registrar's Office.

Luckily for the Genito couple, their son was able to secure a full tuition scholarship from the Ateneo de Manila University.

"If it were not for the scholarship, I think I would be crying all day," Salome Genito said.

Deo said he and his wife were worrying for their daughter's college education because they were relying solely on CAP. "We'll be insisting on our CAP policy in that case. Where else do we get the money?"

Disgusted

The one who sold the CAP policy to the Genitos is in the same boat.

"I'm really disgusted," said Carmelita Cristobal, an assistant division chief in a government agency, who had bought two CAP pension policies for her children.

Now grown up, Cristobal's children have also taken out for their own children CAP educational policies, which they are still paying for.

"CAP should work to make sure all their clients recover their money in full. They've worked hard for it," Cristobal said.

"They should not only get what they paid, but the full amount that they're supposed to receive under their plan," she added.

Warning

Having once been a CAP agent, Cristobal said she did not get any advice, not even an informal one, from the CAP area manager when the bad rumors started.

She said CAP had been warned "long before" to stop selling plans so that its deficit would not worsen. "But up to this time they're still selling CAP. And people are still banking on CAP. After all, who would not have trusted CAP?" she said.

Cristobal now regrets having asked her children to pay their CAP premiums that were due last November despite the rumors. "*Sayang* (What a pity). The money they have already paid could have bought them a house," she said.

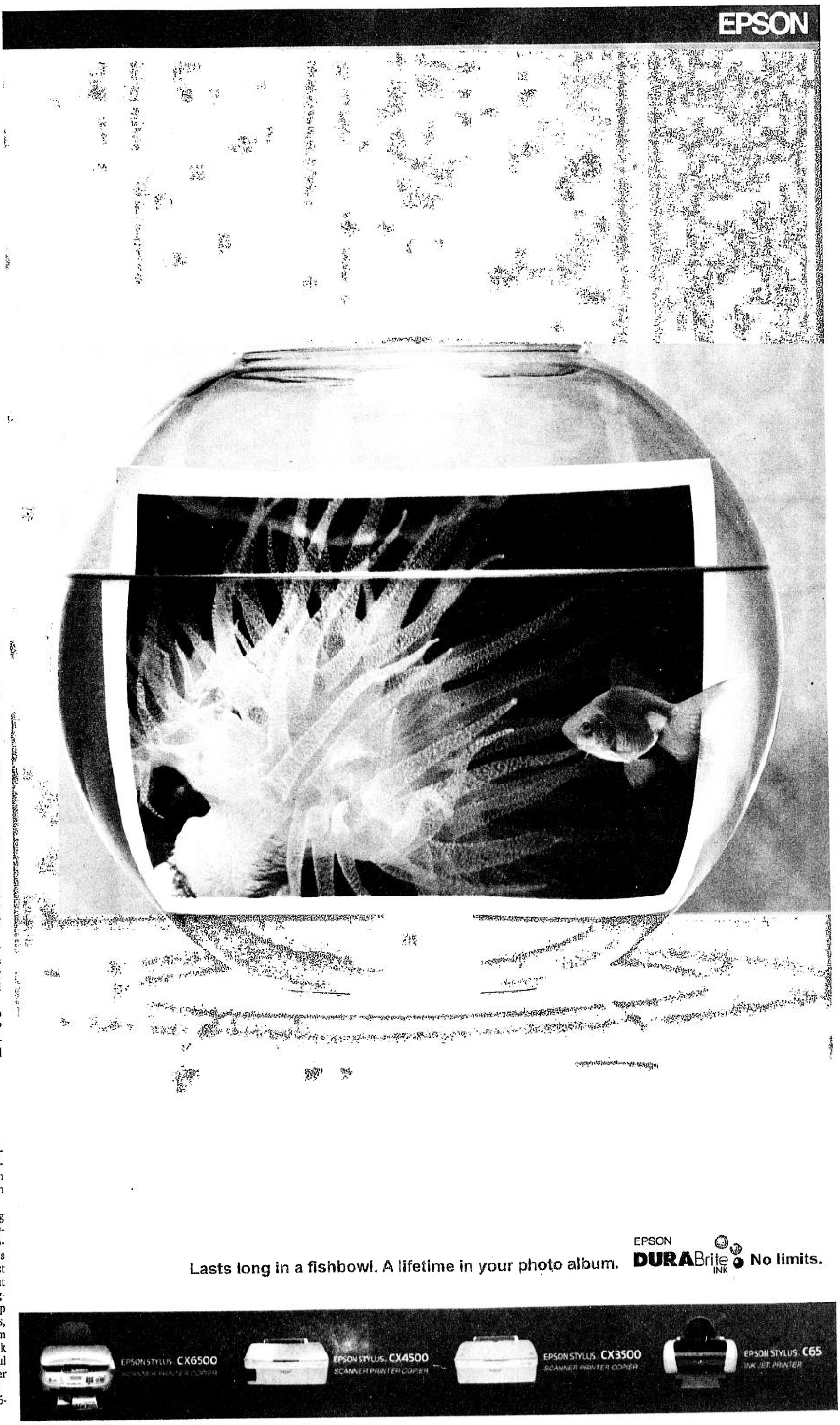
For now, Deo and Salome are holding on to their "certificate of full payment" from CAP that was signed by no less than former President Diosdado Macapagal, who was board chair from 1994 to 1997.

Lowney speaks on what makes the Jesuits tick

THE NINOY & Cory Aquino Center for Leadership in cooperation with Jesuit Communications will host the Chris Lowney Lecture on Feb. 4, 2005, at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Makati City from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Lowney, author of the groundbreaking book, Heroic Leadership, wrote about a 450-year-old company—the Jesuits—which pioneered a unique formula for molding leaders and in the process built one of history's most successful companies. He further wrote that the Jesuits' enduring success rested on the Ignatian spirit in the context of leadership grounded on the four pillars: self-awareness, ingenuity, love and heroism. Reviews from leaders in various fields have hailed the book and have recommended it as a very helpful framework for leadership. Lowney, a former Jesuit, was an executive at J.P. Morgan & Co.

For details, call Zheilla Villuga at 0926-4027 (telefax) and 426-6001 ext. 4089.



The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

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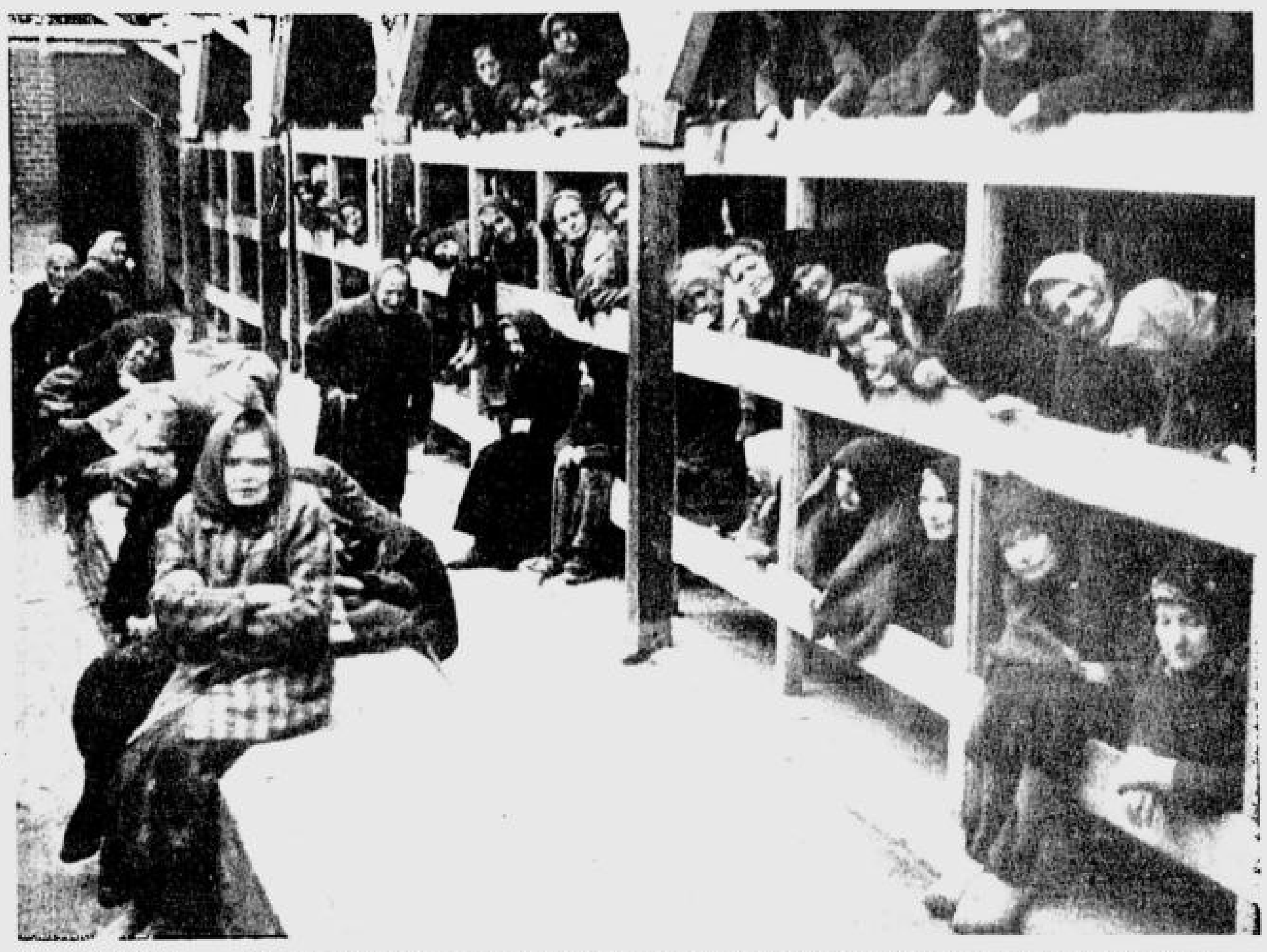

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REUTERS

Leaders mark Auschwitz liberation day

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"We must constantly remind each other of the message, not only when there are ceremonies like the one today," he said.

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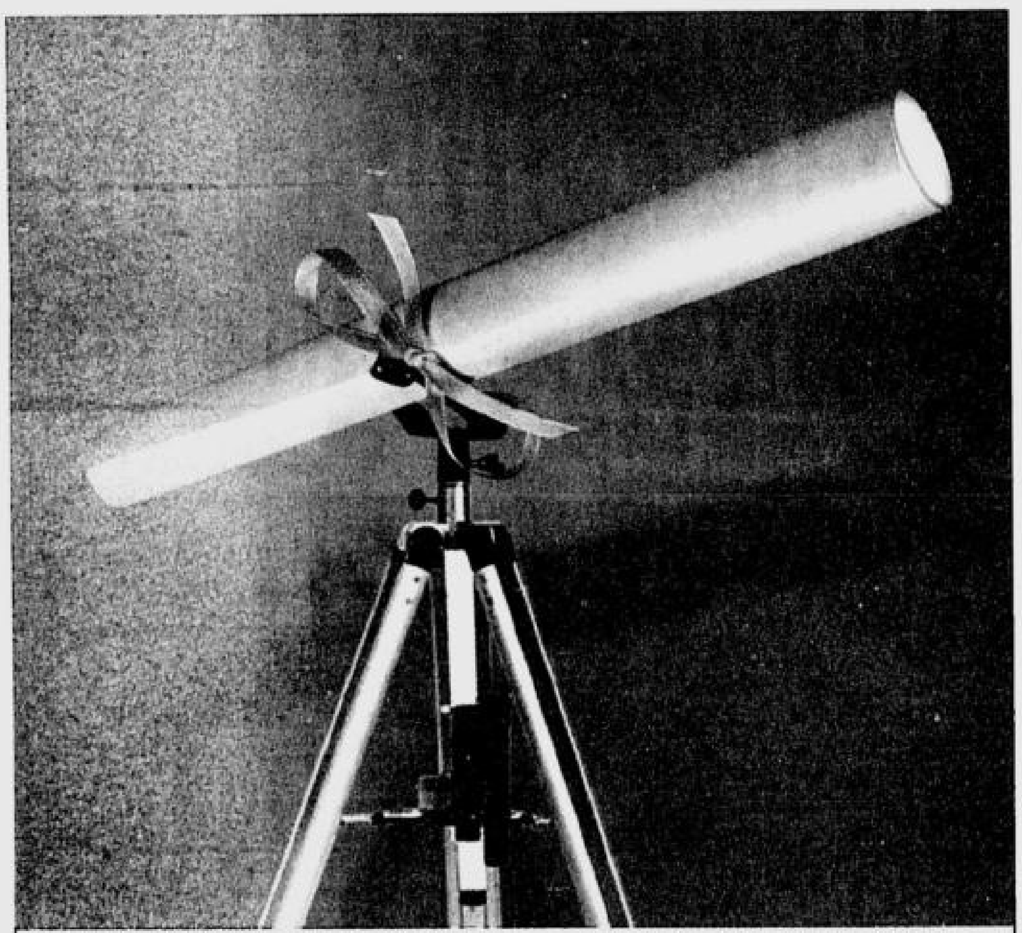

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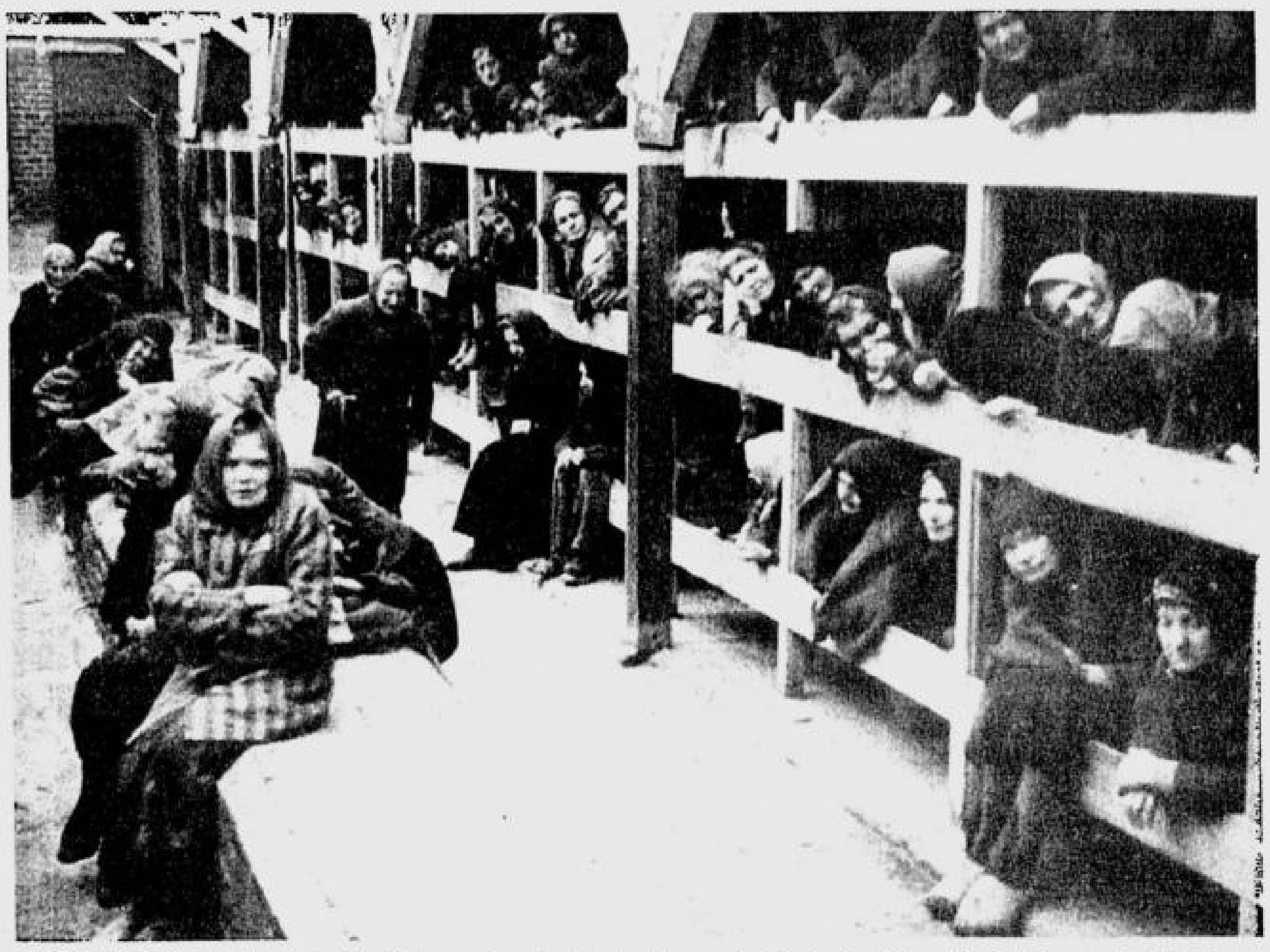

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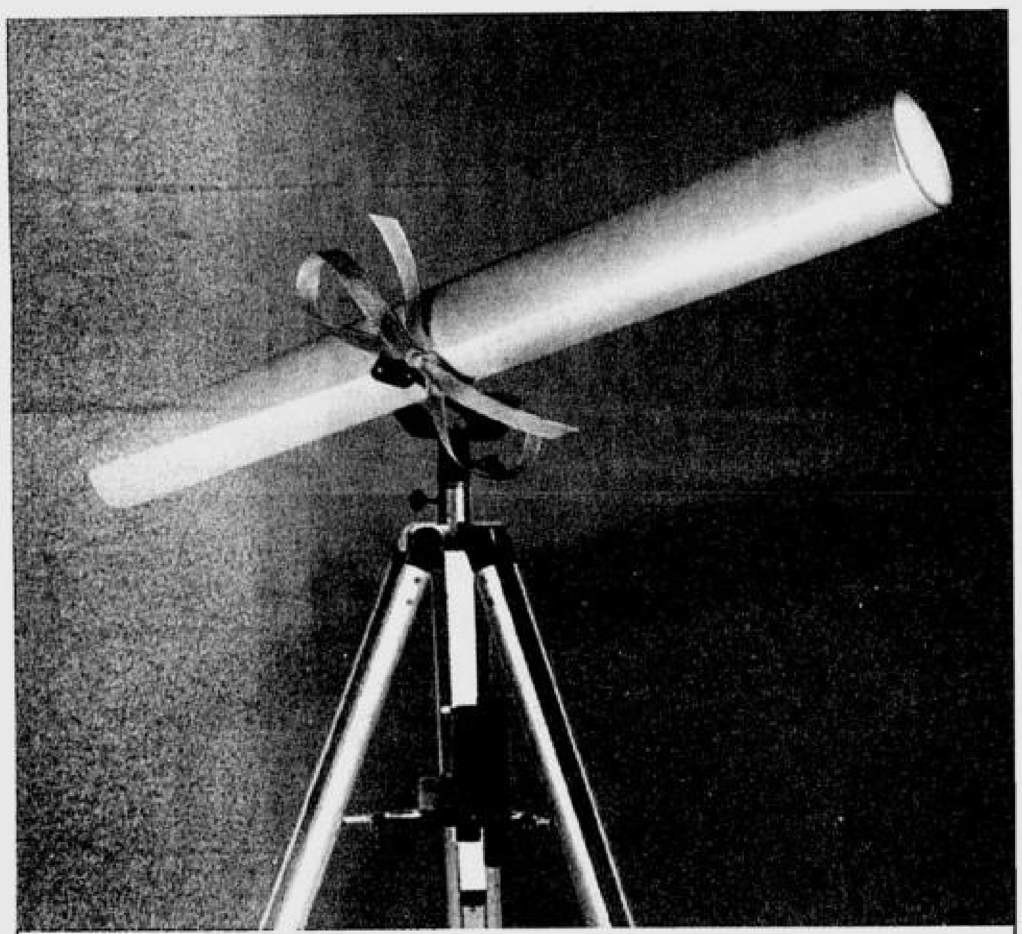

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Rice takes charge

WASHINGTON — Condoleezza Rice was sworn into office as US secretary of state late Wednesday following her Senate approval and after blistering Democratic attacks over Iraq that herald a fierce partisan debate on foreign policy in the coming years.

Rice, a former national security adviser to President George W. Bush and one of his closest aides, was cleared just hours earlier by the Senate to replace Colin Powell as chief US diplomat by a vote of 85 to 13, with two abstentions.

The 50-year-old academic and trained concert pianist was sworn in by White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card in a short ceremony, immediately making Rice the new top US diplomat and allowing her to get to work at her new state department desk Thursday.

President George W. Bush will attend an official ceremony for Rice on Friday, according to White House spokesperson Scott McClellan.

Rice is the second woman, and first black woman, to assume the post of chief US diplomat.

However, the 13 "no" votes cast by Democrats were the most for a secretary of state since World War II, highlighting the party's divisions with the Republican administration over Iraq and the handling of the war on terror in general.

The Democrats used Rice's marathon confirmation hearings last week and eight hours of debate in the full Senate to signal their determined opposition to the policies she helped craft after the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks. *AFP*

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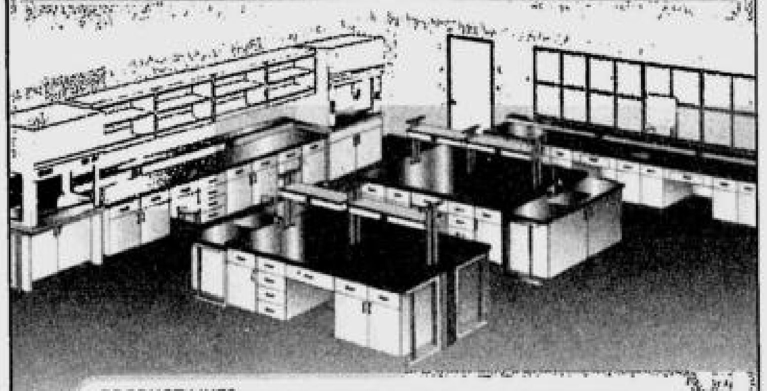

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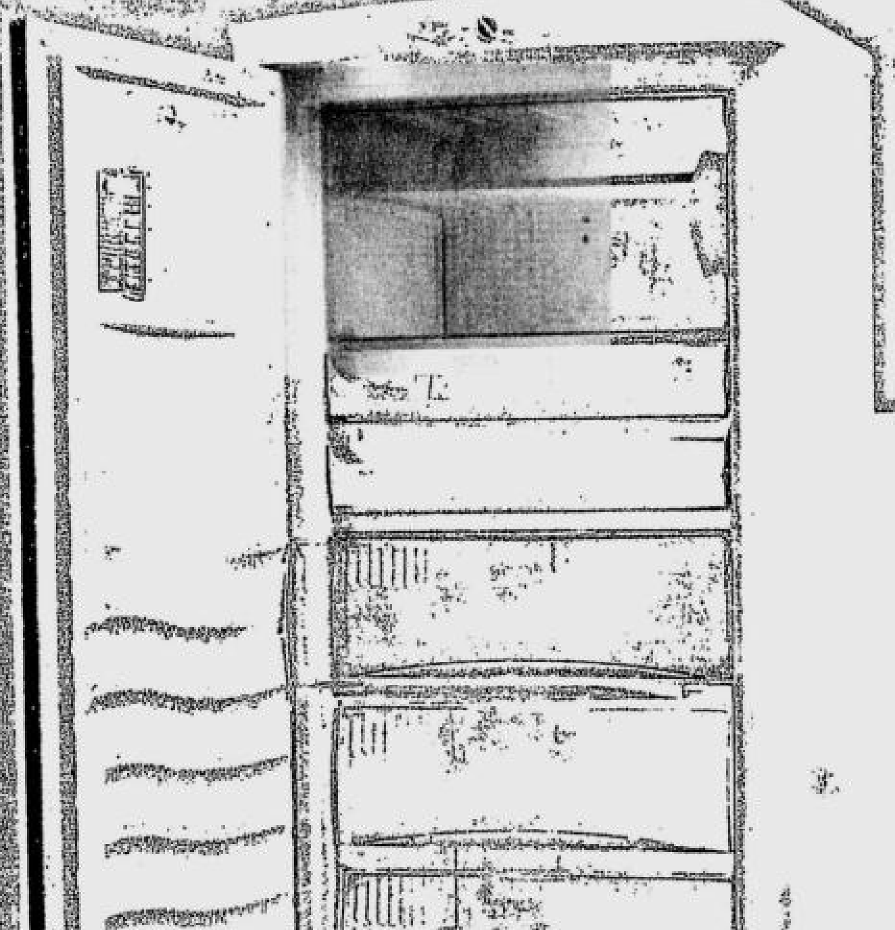

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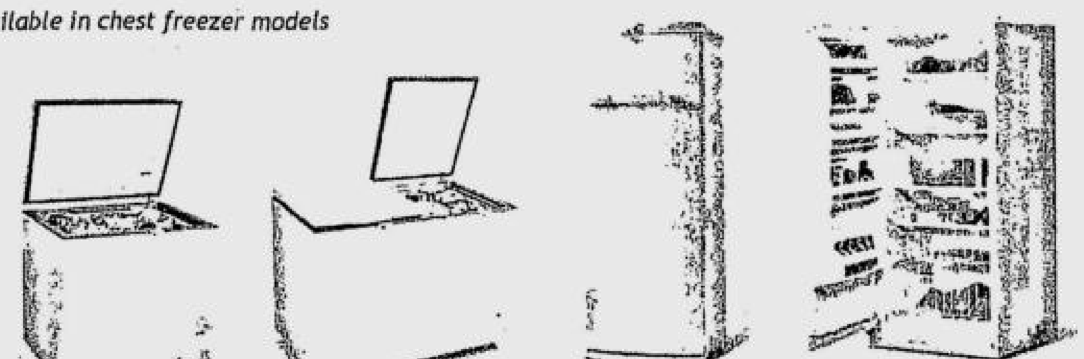

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Strong quake strikes west of Sumatra

HONG KONG—A strong earthquake struck off the tsunami-ravaged west coast of Sumatra in northern Indonesia, Hong Kong seismologists said Thursday.

There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

The 6.1-magnitude quake hit the coast at 5:06 a.m. local time Thursday the Hong Kong Observatory said.

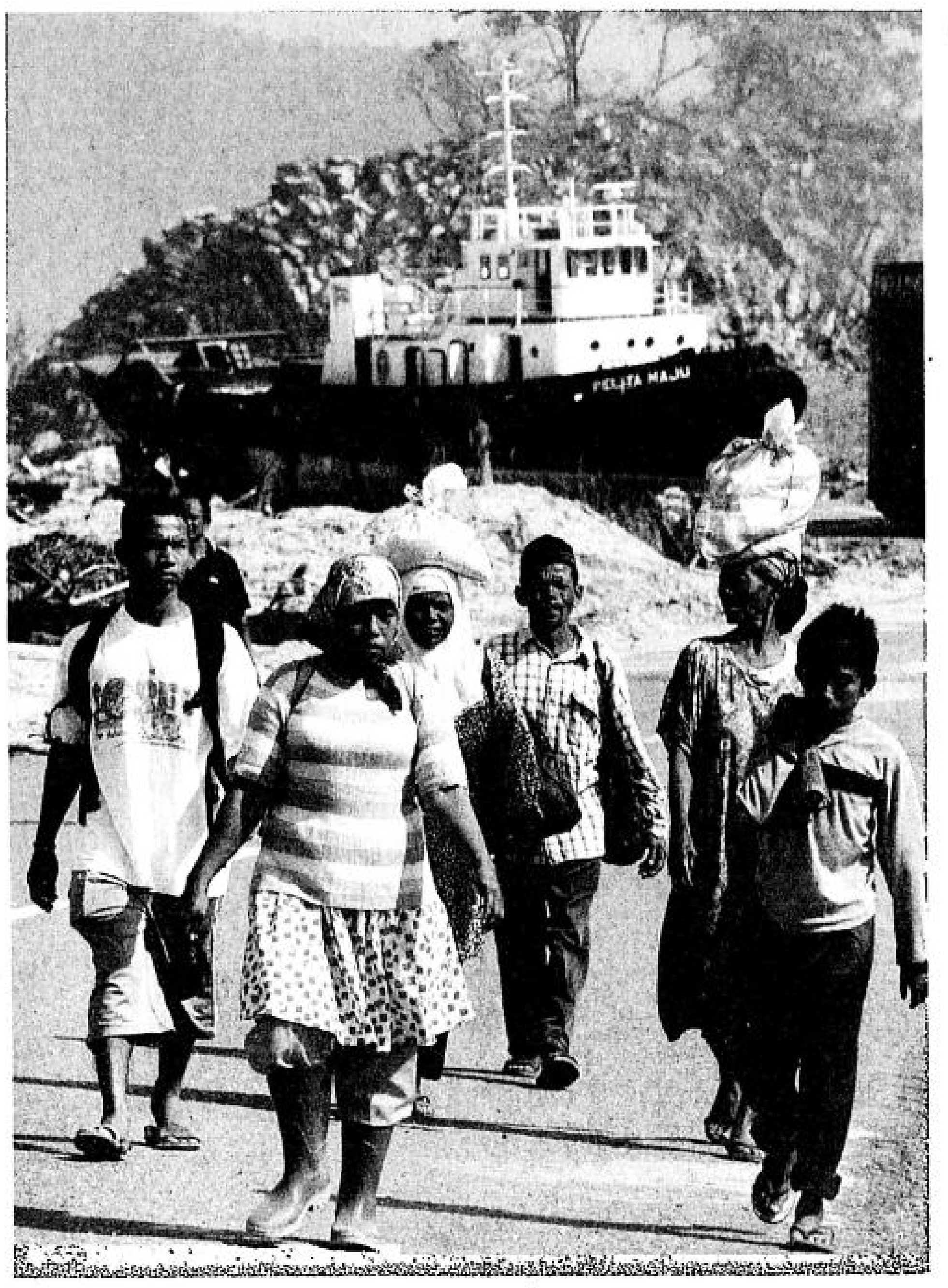
The seismologists said the quake was centered about 300 km southwest of Banda Aceh, the capital of the Indonesian province hit hard by a massive 9.0-magnitude quake on Dec. 26 and the tsunami it spawned.

However, the Indonesian Meteorology and Geophysics Agency put the magnitude of the quake at 4.6, and said it was followed minutes later by another quake of 4.2 magnitude. It said there were no reports of casualties or damage.

The first quake was felt in Banda Aceh, where it lasted about five seconds but was not intense. It did not cause any panic.

Earlier, the Hong Kong observatory reported a 5.6-magnitude earthquake near India's remote Nicobar islands, which have been jolted in recent weeks by aftershocks from last month's giant quake.

The quake struck at 12:36 a.m. local time Thursday (1:36 a.m. in Manila) and its epicenter was about 345 km north-northwest of Banda Aceh, the observatory said. *AP*



INDONESIAN tsunami survivors with their belongings walk past a ship struck on a road in Lhoknga, Aceh province, Jan. 27. Last month's devastating earthquake and tsunamis that swept the region left the Asian-wide toll of presumed dead from the disaster exceeding 280,000. AFP

Tsunami aid effort 'in chaos' as deaths continue to mount

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—The multinational relief effort in parts of Indonesia's tsunami-hit Aceh province is in chaos, an official report said Thursday, as the number of people presumed dead continued to rise and the UN warned some communities remained stranded.

"The west coast of Aceh continues to receive aid and assistance in a chaotic manner," said the report by a 34-member inter-agency team including the Indonesian government, the US military, UN agencies and others.

The report cited "the continued absence of a systematic response to the multiple needs of the population" and said the provision of health services lacked coordination and information was fragmented.

Sanitary conditions remained extremely poor in many areas where internally displaced people (IDPs) live, with most sites having no latrines.

"As a result, most IDPs are defecating in fields, open areas or canals near to their shelters. Some of these are close to rivers or ponds that are used for bathing and washing," said the report, given to AFP by the United Nations' top official in Indonesia, Bo Asplund.

The report also contained good news on the UN-led relief effort with cases of malaria, measles and diarrhea significantly lower than expected and other signs the massive humanitarian effort was being effective.

"Food stocks, though limited in protein and calorie density, are reaching most large population groups via civil authorities and the Indonesian military. Schools are ready to reopen in a few areas and local foods have begun to re-appear in local markets," said the report, written just before the one-month anniversary of the Dec. 26 disaster.

Indonesia's health ministry meanwhile raised its number of people dead and missing, presumed dead by 2,232 to more than 230,000.

Sri Lanka, India and Thailand were also hard hit when giant waves smashed into 11 Indian Ocean coastlines, with the overall death toll now above 283,000.

The inter-agency report urged better coordination to protect "fragile gains" so far achieved in the relief effort in Aceh.

Asplund was more upbeat in his assessment, telling AFP: "Well, coordination can always be improved but I think it's actually working quite well."

"We've come a very long way from when I was here first," he said in an interview with AFP late Wednesday. "We're in early recovery already."

The emergency relief phase was complete in the capital, Banda Aceh, and the west coast town of Meulaboh, he said, with people receiving shelter, food, medicine and water.

"But there are many isolated communities, still small villages on the west coast where people are sort of making makeshift camps in the hills and do not have a lot of access to the services that are provided in Banda Aceh and Meulaboh," Asplund said. *AFP*

Blair calls on US to take climate change seriously

DAVOS, Switzerland—The United States, realizing it cannot defeat global threats like terrorism alone, must cooperate to fight other planetary challenges like climate change, British Prime Minister Tony Blair said on Wednesday.

"Interdependence is no longer disputed," said Blair, speaking to a forum of business and political leaders. "If America wants the rest of the world to be part of the agenda it has set, it must be part of their agenda too."

President George W. Bush's inauguration speech last week showed the United States realized it could not defeat terror threats just by military means or on its own, said Blair, one of the US leader's staunchest allies.

Defending the speech, which was accused of not reflecting the reality of US policies, Blair said its support for extending democracy and liberty "emphatically puts defeating the causes of terrorism alongside defeating the terrorists."

Blair said after international divisions over the war in Iraq, there was "a wish to re-unify." He has predicted Bush's second term would see more account taken of the views of Europe, which the president visits next month on a fence-mending trip.

There was common purpose in fighting global terrorism, extending democracy and seeking peace in the Middle East, said Blair, stressing that those issues and his agenda for this year's Group of Eight presidency could not be decoupled.

Blair wants to focus British leadership of the G8 group of leading industrialized nations on relieving poverty and disease in Africa and on combating climate change.

But the Bush administration has little enthusiasm for mandatory action to tackle the warming of the planet.

It has refused to sign up to the Kyoto protocol on cutting emissions thought to cause global warming, arguing it would cost US jobs and unfairly burden developed states while imposing no obligation on poorer polluting states such as China and India.

A broad belief in Europe that scientists have proved global warming is a reality is not so widely shared in the United States. *Reuters*

Antiglobalization forum to counter Davos summit

PORTO ALEGRE, Brazil—More than 50,000 antiglobalization activists took to the streets Wednesday in Porto Alegre in a gathering meant to counter the Davos summit of political, financial and business heavyweights.

Children from five continents held aloft a banner that proclaimed: "Another world is possible," as militants marched through the southern Brazilian city, marking the start of their six-day World Social Forum.

The eclectic gathering of pacifists, environmentalists, libertarians, trade unionists and anti-establishment militants was timed to coincide with its nemesis, the World Economic Forum held in the swank Swiss mountain resort of Davos.

Organizers said some 100,000 participants will take part in the fifth annual WSF, which features hundreds of workshops dealing with issues such as debt, poverty and development. *AFP*

Suicidal man leaves car on LA tracks, causes train collision which kills 10

GLENDALE, California—Ten people were killed and more than 100 injured in this Los Angeles suburb Wednesday when two commuter trains slammed into each other after one of them hit a car left on the lines by a suicidal man, police said.

A murder investigation was launched as the death toll rose following the horrific early morning crash involving three trains and a sports utility vehicle in the heavily populated suburb of Glendale.

Rescuers were picking through the mangled wreckage of the trains that collided with an explosive crash just after 6 a.m. after one of them derailed as it ploughed into the abandoned vehicle.

"We have 10 fatalities so far and well over 100 injured," Glendale Police Chief Randy Adams told reporters, adding that the probe into the accident had turned into a homicide investigation.

"This whole incident was started by a deranged individual who was suicidal," he said announcing that the depressed driver, identified as Juan Manuel Alvarez, 26, was unhurt and was in custody.

The police chief said Alvarez was on suicide watch, but that he has been talking to investigators.

"He has been cooperative and he has talked to our investigators," Adams said, adding that "his demeanor is distraught, remorseful, but cooperative."

The driver was expected to be charged with murder, police said. Adams said Alvarez would likely face up to 10 counts of murder.

The driver allegedly maneuvered his Jeep onto the tracks, where it became stuck, and waited for a train to end his life, according to Adams and other police officials.

"He was intent at that time on taking his own life but changed his mind," Adams told reporters.

"He exited the vehicle and stood by as a southbound Metrolink train struck his vehicle, causing the train to derail and strike the northbound train," the police chief said.

After hitting the car, the packed rush-hour train, which was bound for Los Angeles' Union Station, jumped its tracks and jack-knifed into the path of an oncoming commuter train heading in the opposite direction.

One of the stricken trains then side-swiped a stationary freight train that was parked on a side-track in the area, knocking it over, officials said.

Carnage ensued. "It sounded like thunder," said Karen Mendoza, an employee at a nearby wholesale store who called emergency services when she heard the accident. *AFP*

WRECKAGE of the commuter train crash Jan. 26 in Glendale, California. AFP

India's partnership with Asean has deepened, expanded

By N. Ram

VIENTIANE—If India's engagement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has expanded and deepened a great deal over the past 12 years, this is quite modest in comparison with the powerful relationship China has forged with the regional grouping.

The level of two-way trade between Asean and its three East Asian partners, Japan, China and South Korea, can be taken as rough indicators of the level of economic partnership achieved. For Asean and the three taken together, two-way trade was close to $196 billion in 2004. Naturally, the Japanese economy—despite the prolonged recession—has the lion's share in this. But China's economic partnership with Asean is racing ahead. Two-way trade between Asean and China is now close to $50 billion and the target for 2005 is $100 billion.

If Asean and the partnerships and interactions it has has developed with conspicuous success are all about ways and means to accelerate economic development, some political subtexts have come on the agenda in recent years. With the induction of two socialist countries, Vietnam (1995) and Laos (1997), a former socialist country still recovering from the ravages of Pol Potism, Cambodia (1999), and Burma (1997), political diversity has increased within the regional grouping. The two most politically significant changes Asean has experienced over the last few years are (a) the arrival of a problematical security agenda and set of political concerns that came with 9/11, and (b) the growing weight of China and all it stands for in the Asean scheme of things. Interestingly, China was the first dialogue partner to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia; this happened at the 2003 Asean summit at Bali where a Strategic Partnership between the world's most populous country and the regional association was announced. By contrast, Japan's political influence in this region seems to be waning.

As for the new Asean, India has the advantage of having traditionally strong relations with the Indochinese countries—civilizationally, politically, and, more recently, through development cooperation and assistance. Of the three Laos, which is India's country coordinator in Asean, is the smallest and the most in need of economic assistance. With a population of 5.7 million, close to half of whom live in poverty, it has set itself the target of coming out of the "Least Developed County" category by 2020. Along with Vietnam, it has firmly supported India's candidature for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. Political feelings toward India are warm and spontaneously friendly.

India has made a good start by including a speciality neurological hospital, funding for 150 km of power transmission lines, an IT Center, an entrepreneurship center in its agenda of development cooperation. But, as the top Lao leaders reminded Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in their meetings with him in Vientiane, the really big assistance could come in the field of agriculture, where India, its research institutions and its business community, could contribute a great deal. India would also do well to go ahead and commit itself to the restoration of the Unesco World Heritage site of Wat Phu in southern Laos, which goes back to the 5th century A.D. and is a marvelous reminder of the civilizational bond between India and Southeast Asia. *The Hindu*

InqBox
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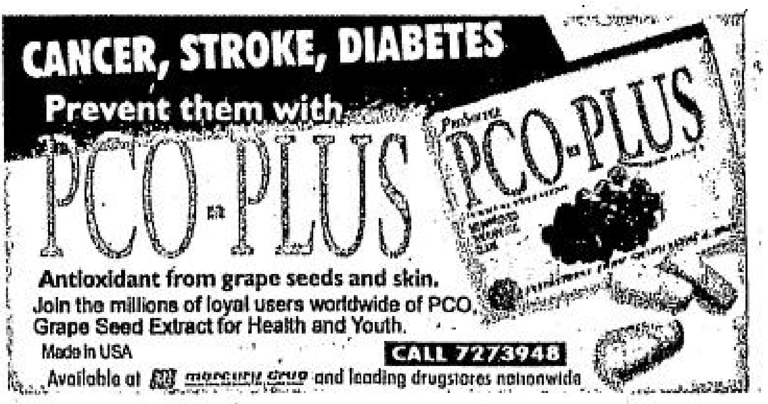

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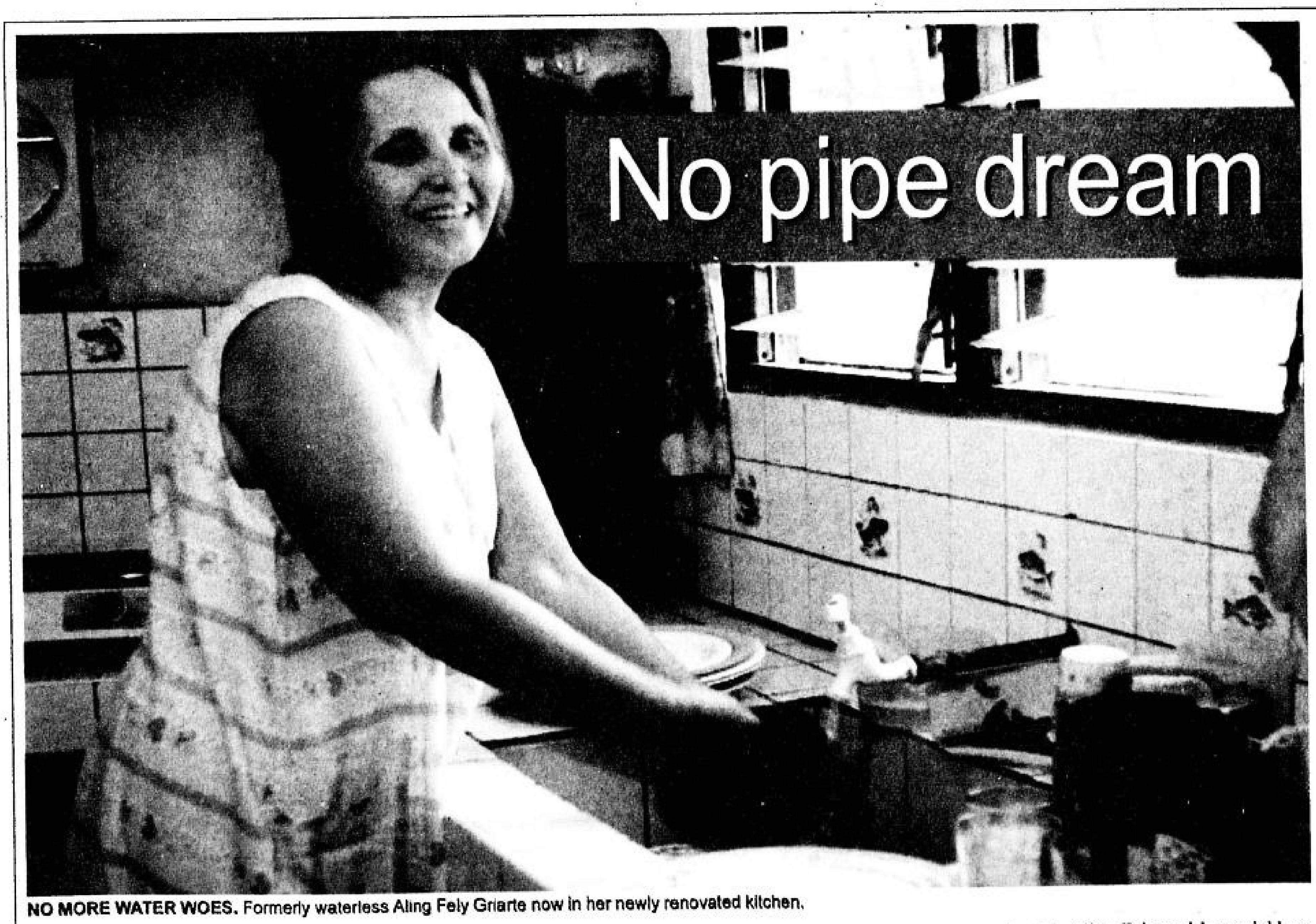


No pipe dream

More than 2,000 families in Mandaluyong City finally get to sleep soundly at nights, thanks to having water flowing from their taps.

NO MORE WATER WOES. Formerly waterless Aling Fely Griarte now in her newly renovated kitchen.

For years, Fely Griarte felt she was acting out a surreal scene from a soap opera.

Every day just after midnight, she and her children would rush out of bed to join more than a hundred tired bodies and a long line of pails, scrambling for water from a public faucet.

Her life, Aling Fely said, could be told in numbers: 59 years old, five to ten pails, 95 minutes of waiting, 8 a.m. before the faucet runs dry.

For around 2,000 families in Blocks 37-39 Welfareville, Barangay Addition Hills in Mandaluyong City, life revolved around one public faucet.

"Every day, we were robbed of a good rest, good health; some were too tired to stay awake at work," said Aling Fely, a long-time resident and meat inspector at the Pasig City Hall.

Some enterprising people in the area used to charge residents about P400 to P500 a month reselling water from deep wells.

As many lived on daily wages as laborers, water was a pricey commodity. So when Manila Water Company, Inc. started supplying water to the area in 2002 as part of its *Tubig Para sa Barangay* flagship project, Aling Fely said she and her neighbors thought, "our prayers have finally been answered."

Not only are Welfareville residents enjoying 24-hour water availability, their average monthly water bill has been halved.

Now that they can put their water woes to rest, Aling Fely and her neighbors focus on improving the quality of the other aspects of their lives.

Since Manila Water initiated in the area the *Kabuhayan Para sa Barangay*, a microfinance program, many have gone into piggery, tilapia or goat raising, *sari-sari* store, ready-to-wear, and eatery businesses.

Many residents used to think it would be hard to get out of the economic rut in Welfareville.

"We didn't know we could live our dreams again when water started coming out of our faucets," Aling Fely said.

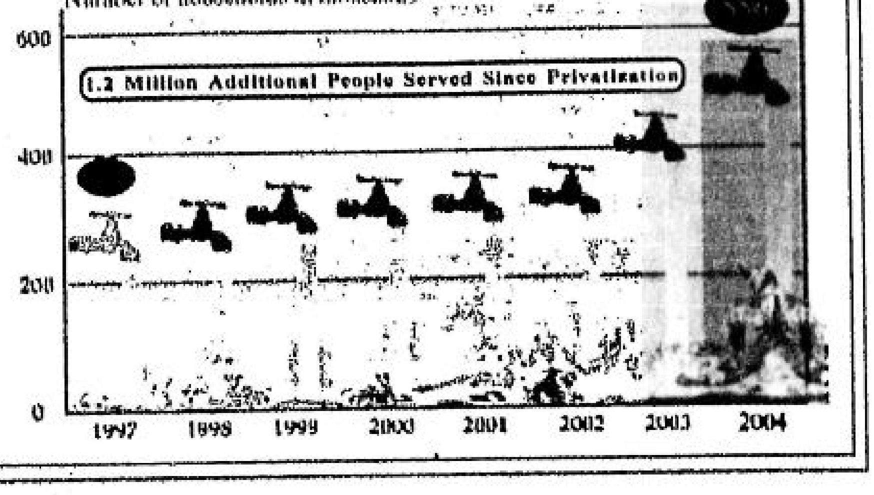
More than one million people added

Ayala-led Manila Water Company, Inc. already serves more than 556,000 households since the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) was privatized in 1997.

Eighty-seven percent of the East Zone population now has 24-hour water supply – more than triple the area being served in 1997 when only 27 percent were benefiting from uninterrupted service.

To sustain its financial viability, the private contractor is embarking on a P19-billion capital expansion program over the next five years.

Its goal is to cover 94 percent of the East Zone population, lay down 885 kilometers of new pipelines and replace century-old pipes in the metropolis.



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OPINION

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Judicial underworld

EDITORIAL

THERE seems to be a conflict of interpretations of the results of the survey of the Social Weather Stations on judicial corruption. Although one newspaper reported that the survey showed lawyers believing that corruption in the judiciary had lessened compared with 10 years ago, this paper stated otherwise. In any case, if there was a slight improvement in perception, it was negligible. As the SWS press statement said, "Corruption remains a problem."

"Touché," the judges seemed to say. According to the survey of judges, lawyers have become more corrupt.

What we are treated to here is the sight of judicial professionals not only eyeing one another with suspicion, but throwing mud at each other. Neither side seems to know that mud has been in its domain in the first place, so that each side has plenty of mud for ammunition.

A plague on both their houses! Lawyers and judges seem to be impervious to the deepening disenchantment of the public with the workings of justice. If the survey results are any indication, even legal professionals have become disenchanted with one another, so that they can only put down each other. They violate the underworld rule of honor among thieves, and may yet shame the professional criminals. The ultimate Mafioso does not come in pompous suit and cigar, but in judicial robes.

But there's more. The SWS survey disclosed that lawyers felt they couldn't do anything about corruption. "Although half or 49 percent say they know a case in their own city or province where a judge took a bribe, only 8 percent reported the bribery," the SWS firm said. "The main excuse of those who kept silent is that they could not prove it."

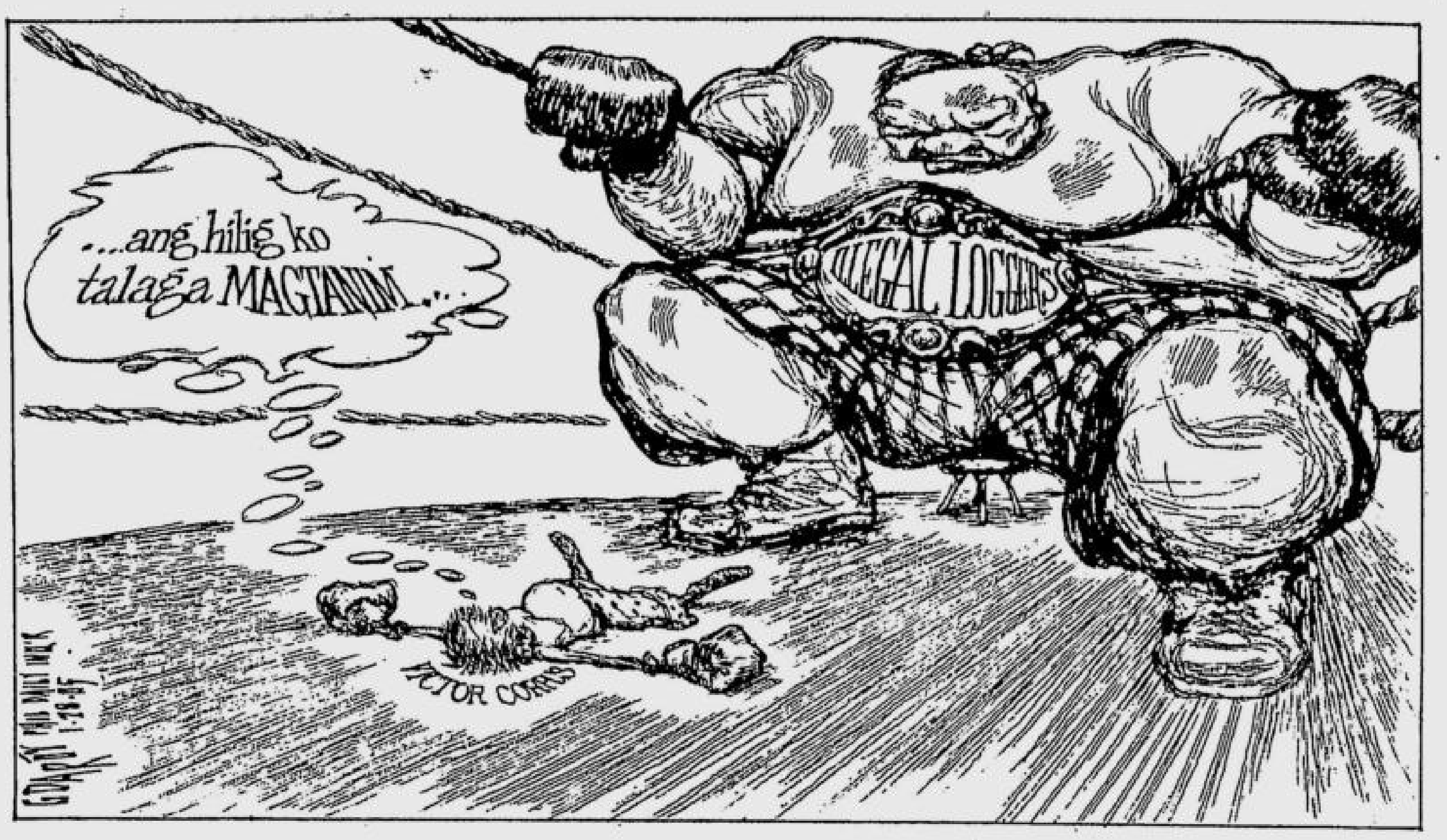
Considering this finding, one cannot share the optimism of SWS head Mahar Mangahas on the "idealism" that the members of the bar supposedly have. The pollster said that the survey showed that corruption "remains a serious problem in the judicial system but it is not cultural." He added: "They're saying there's nothing to be done about (corruption) but it's not accepted. There's still idealism."

Frankly, we can't see any idealism there. What we see is resignation and cooptation. The negligible percentage of lawyers who said they reported the bribery of judges means that lawyers would rather go along with the corruption current rather than fight it. Our law schools seem to have produced lawyers without spine and ethics. It seems that for all their long years of study of legal jurisprudence and the intricacies of the law, our law graduates have become so overwhelmed by legal scholarship and technicality that they arrive at a point of stagnancy whenever they are confronted with blatant acts of corruption. To expose or not to expose? To oppose or not to oppose? The Hamletesque dilemma, of course, seems to have been resolved in the direction of stasis. The SWS survey should support the call for a moratorium not only on new law schools, but also new law graduates for 10 years. Our civil law schools are filling the bar with lemons.

The corruption of lawyers and judges—and the gutlessness of members of the bar against graft—are reasons enough to despair about any hope for reforming the system of justice in the Philippines. If all that lawyers could do about judicial corruption is to be sensitive about it—to turn away and let things be but also tell pollsters that they are "idealistic" and frown on bribery and extortion—then there's no hope for justice in this country. No, there's no hope for this country, period.

If lawyers cannot turn up evidence that would stand in court to prove that a judge had extorted money to render a favorable decision, or another lawyer had bribed a judge, then how much less would ordinary people be in a position to produce the evidence and make a strong case against corruption? Should the public have any reason to hope for the coming of good government and a fair administration of justice with lawyers who slink away at the sight of corruption?

One suspects, of course, that the weak-kneed response of lawyers to the corruption of their fellow members of the bar is true to form of the legal establishment that seems to mask its depredations under the veneer of legal punditry, avowals of honor, and correct deportment. Alas, our lawyers seem to have made a mockery of the law they have sworn to uphold. When the lawyers become the lawless, justice cannot be dispensed. Our lawyers have run off with the law, and we are left with nothing but legal gibberish and lawyer's thunder—all signifying nothing.



Pasig ferry may help ease land traffic

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

A LITTLE bit of good news in an otherwise bleak situation, like a ray of sunshine during a cloudy day, is the announcement that the government will revive the ferry service in the Pasig River, something that this column has long been urging. The ferry will greatly contribute to decongesting the streets of Metro Manila and shorten travel time from Manila to points east.

The Pasig River, as well as its tributaries and esteros, was a water highway for both passenger and cargo long before we were seduced by the land vehicles powered by the internal combustion engine. It is still a useful highway in the same way that Thailand and Australia are using their waterways (the floating markets of Thailand is a tourist attraction) for transportation.

A ferry service was attempted twice or thrice but all failed for a number of reasons: the water vessels fielded were small and low in the water so that passengers were scared to board them and, once aboard, they couldn't help but smell the stinking water. Besides, the view from the boat was depressing and revolting: the backyards of factories, long lines of squatter shanties along the banks with people defecating into the water, and piles of trash everywhere.

Because of the shallowness of the river, the low bridges spanning it, and the stink of the water, the ferry boats should be of shallow draft and should have air-conditioning to keep the smell out. The ferry boats of Disney World in Orlando, Florida, (not the double-deckers of the Hong Kong ferry) would make a good model. They are of shallow draft, just right for the shallow waters of the Pasig, and are air-conditioned with the front and back decks open for smokers.

But even with first-class boats, a ferry service might still fail if the passengers see the same depressing sights along the banks. Along with the ferry, the national government and the local government units should develop the right-of-way along the banks as roads, the same way Mayor Lito Atienza is developing the Manila riverbanks into river walks.

Our officials have traveled around the world enough to see how other countries have made use of their rivers. In Sydney, Australia, there is a ferry service from downtown along the river to the sea. Both banks have been transformed into streets. The most expensive houses line the river. You can watch a concert at the Sydney Opera House, take the ferry home at midnight, and be home in a few minutes.

In the United States, notably in San Antonio, Texas, and New Orleans, the riverbanks have been developed into entertainment and leisure spots. And in Europe, all the major rivers are tourist attractions with ferryboats taking tourists on river cruises. Any other country with a major river cutting through its main metropolis, like the Pasig bisecting Metro Manila, will not hesitate to develop it for tourism.

But the banks of our Pasig River can hardly be attractive to tourists. They are the ugly backyards of factories which dump their garbage and keep the equipment they want to hide there. Squatter shanties also line the banks like a festering sore.

We should develop the banks into streets all the way to Laguna Lake. The owners of lots along the river may even agree to donate part of their backyards to widen the streets. After all, the value of their properties will rise. Instead of just being their backyards, these properties will have another frontage.

And oh, the governments should also clear the undersides of bridges of squatters, otherwise ferryboats passing under will emerge with their roofs festooned with garbage, the same way railroad trains become like a garbage dump when they pass through a squatter colony.

Traveling by boat across the metropolis is much more relaxing and cooler than bearing the heat and dust cooped up in a jeepney or bus, inching through traffic. Before the Coastal Road to Cavite was constructed, there was a ferry service from Luneta to Cavite City that took workers to and from their homes and jobs. We used to take this ferry on late afternoons from Manila to Cavite and back just to relax, sipping cold beer on deck during the trip. The ferry was discontinued when the road was finished, but it is now so choked with traffic that the ferry service should be revived.

In fact, the Pasig River ferry should later be extended to Laguna Lake (and a boulevard built around the lake) to service the lakeshore towns.

Another project that I have repeatedly been urging is the use of both banks of the Tullahan-Tenejeros River from Manila Bay, through Malabon, to Valenzuela as streets. A flood control dike is planned for the whole stretch of the river. It is logical to turn the concrete tops of the dikes into roads to provide commuters with another highway besides the congested MacArthur Highway. That should stop squatters from building their shanties on the banks of the river, the factories from emptying their effluents into it, and people from throwing their garbage into the river and making it their own private cesspool. With roads lining the banks, the value of adjoining lots would appreciate as they would have another street frontage, and the local governments can collect more in real estate taxes.

Then another ferry service can connect Valenzuela and Malabon to Manila and the Pasig River and Cavite ferry services.

Surveys: the new oracles of law

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

JUSTICE Holmes said that law is nothing but a prediction of what the courts in fact will do, and that we must turn to the "oracles of the law," the record of past decided cases, to help us perform that prophetic mission. Today in an age when court decisions are said to be unpredictable, we have instead turned to polling surveys to help us find our way.

And on what basis do I say that court decisions are unpredictable? I relied on Social Weather Stations (SWS) surveys, of course! Had I been true to Holmes, I would have turned to the Supreme Court Reports Annotated (or SCRA), reviewed a line of cases and determined whether the Court had been consistent or whether it had done doctrinal "flip-flops." But no, in the age of surveys, I committed heresy and turned to two SWS polls. In the 1994/96 and 2003/04 surveys, two out of three lawyers and one of every two judges said that court decisions were "unpredictable." (Significantly, there was a small rise in the number of non-believers among the judges: 50 percent said the courts were predictable in 1995, and only 43 percent in 2003.)

The latest SWS study of the judiciary and the legal profession was released earlier this week, showing "some improvements but also recurring problems," based on a sample survey of 400 lawyers and 889 trial judges.

The first problem with surveys about courts is that lawyers do not like to read statistics, and doubt whatever truths those numbers may yield. Indeed, had they been good with numbers, they might have gone to medical school or business school instead. They are taught that there are three kinds of lies: "lies, damned lies, and statistics." The rules of evidence are geared toward anecdotal evidence, a concrete set of facts, a story that can move a human judge better than pages of charts and diagrams. The first time statistics were used before the US Supreme Court was such a memorable event that the document—which marshaled public health data to uphold a maternity leave law and said that congress had validly interfered with the liberty to contract of both employer and employee—is now called the Brandeis brief, and its author has since become the famous Justice Louis Brandeis. I can therefore imagine lawyers, looking at the survey pool of 400 lawyers, and ask: So you asked only 400! How about the 2,500 other lawyers, didn't you ask them, too?

Subjecting the courts to popular surveys would have been unthinkable in the past. As Supreme Court Justice Artemio Panganiban said yesterday in a keynote address at an Asian Development Bank meeting on Justice Reforms, there was a time when the highest court "was shrouded in mystery[,] its processes secretive, its sessions private, and its members shielded from public scrutiny." Today "the doors of the judicial fortress have been partially opened[,] the gods ... a bit more accessible[,] their work ... subjected to more rigid public scrutiny."

This is a giant step forward but we must tread with caution.

In our post-Marcos democracy, we have imbibed Aristotle's wisdom that if you wish to know if a shoe fits, ask not the expert shoemaker; ask him who wears the shoe. Whereas before, only Unger's "adepts and notables" of the law and Justice Panganiban's Olympian gods took part in judging the courts, today the lay public has asserted itself as a stakeholder. We recognize that the courts cannot be indifferent to the community's sense of justice. A judge who is not attuned to public opinion loses his credibility and legitimacy.

I am, however, wary of popularity surveys of non-political institutions. First of all, surveys usually deal with subjective perceptions, not with objective conditions, the same distinction, I recall, between nuomena (things as they are) and phenomena (things as they appear to be). For instance, the SWS had two separate questions on corruption, one on "estimates of corrupt judicial personnel" and another on "awareness of judicial bribery." The first dealt with personal impressions about court personnel, the second with actual knowledge of corruption—two entirely different things. If the problem being addressed is poor perception, then what is the solution? Good public relations programs? The SWS also asked about "the usual pace of the courts from the time a case is submitted for decision." Too slow, said 50 percent of the lawyers and only 9 percent of the judges. Naturally, it depends on whom you ask; those waiting for the decision are sure to be less patient than those who have to write it.

Second and more fundamentally, all branches of government—the President, Congress and the courts—are answerable to the sovereign people, but the courts can be made to account only in specific ways. We, the sovereign people, disapprove of our elected leaders by not voting for them during elections. We disapprove of our courts by challenging their reasoning and by arguing against the loftiness of their causes.

Partisans may condemn the courts simply because they do not like the outcome of their verdict, solely on the basis of who won or who lost. Fine, they can talk but we need not listen. We must listen only if the criticism is addressed to the quality of the court's reasoning and the legal basis for its moral claims. In the words of Justice Panganiban, "Our people no longer accept judicial doctrines they do not understand. Neither do they blindly defer to judgments that do not explain their rationale."

Surveys subject the courts to a popularity contest where the judges eternally try to stay on the good side of the public, ever politically correct, rarely daring to stand for the politically disfavored. Those who utter the words "Rule of Law and Democracy" in one breath simply do not understand that the function of law is to insulate the unpopular from the "hooting throng."

* * *

Comments to raul.pangalangan@up.edu.ph

A case study for coup plots

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

LT. GEN. Edgardo Espinosa planned to march his Marines to the Edsa Shrine on Jan. 20, 2001, hoping to spark a landslide of military defections from the government of President Joseph Estrada. The plan was for him to issue a signal to his troops in waiting, including 130 Marines deployed at the Ultra Sports Complex, in Pasig City, to storm out of Camp Aguinaldo, spearheaded by tanks, and stage a dramatic entrance into the midst of an expected vast multitude massed in protest at the shrine.

The signal never came. Espinosa's D-Day fizzled out. It was trumped by the announcement on Jan. 19 by Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes of the military high command's withdrawal of support from Estrada. Reyes beat Espinosa to the draw by one day.

Espinosa's cabal was one of about half a dozen groups in the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police that had been furtively plotting separately the overthrow of Estrada for different reasons and objectives. His plot, hatched in collusion with Copa (Philippine Council for Public Affairs), was the most flamboyant. In his interview published by the INQUIRER last Jan. 20, Espinosa said the Marines at Ultra were just a "reserve group," but added that "there were also regulars waiting for the go-ahead signal."

All these conspiratorial groups had one scenario in common: that an acquittal of Estrada by the impeachment tribunal at the Senate could spark massive civil demonstrations, providing the opportunity to fuel large-scale military defections to break away from Estrada's government. Strong signs were appearing during the second half of December 2000 that the tribunal would acquit Estrada of the impeachment charges.

By mid-December no one was certain about the outcome of the trial. The plotters, including Espinosa's group, made plans in the midst of the fluidity and volatility of events. These circumstances made plots shaky and vulnerable to the vagaries of unexpected events. It was like drawing plans on sand being washed by waves. Espinosa's plot was inherently flawed; it was delusional and took many things for granted.

It was not only Reyes' breakaway that threw the plot haywire. Events conspired to spoil it. To use a metaphor, the planets were not aligned to make the plot succeed.

As early as October 2000, when Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit Singson" exposed Estrada's alleged payoffs from *jueteng*, Espinosa had begun meeting with military officers, seeking support for a move by his group to declare a breakaway from Estrada "if the results of the impeachment trial were rigged." This was after Singson had asked him to provide security following the exposé.

According to our files, the Singson-Espinosa group in Copa began planning for a breakaway on Dec. 3. They set Dec. 8 as Defection Day. The date was changed to Dec. 19, after the date for Singson's cross-examination in the impeachment trial was postponed. Then another date was set—Jan. 27—ahead of the expected pro-Estrada decision of the impeachment court on Feb. 12. Another event intervened: the decision of the impeachment court on Jan. 16, 2001 to keep sealed the brown envelope containing evidence of Estrada's alleged falsified bank accounts.

The decision abruptly ended the trial and triggered mass demonstrations and brought the crisis to a head. This prompted the Espinosa plotters to move forward their D-Day to Jan. 20. But the plot was overtaken by events and shifted the initiative to Reyes, who had put in place his own contingency plan for a defection. It turned out that Reyes had a more acute sense of timing and of taking advantage of an unexpected event to seize the moment.

In a post-mortem, retired Gen. Jose Almonte, who was tracking all the key plots and is himself a veteran coup plotter in Edsa 1, told us that earlier plans of the Espinosa group had failed to get the support of the troops and that was why it decided "to force the issue by crossing over to Edsa" in December, to "put pressure on General Reyes and induce a bigger military defection."

Almonte pointed out that the group's military capability was severely limited. Their contacts were mainly with deputy commanders, not the commanders of strategic forces, whose support is crucial to a successful coup.

After the hands of the Espinosa group were forced by the political explosion over the sealed envelopes to set D-Day on Jan. 20, the plan was for Espinosa to march to the shrine and, at the same time, for Gen. Adelberto Yap, the deputy commander of the Air Force, to fly over Edsa to give a signal to Lt. Gen. Arturo Carillo, commander of the Northern Luzon Command and his deputy, Brig. Gen. Alberto Braganza, to declare their own defections and order armored units to Edsa.

Reyes on Jan. 18 had gotten wind of the movements of the Espinosa group and had by then taken steps to strengthen support in the chain of command for his own defection plans.

Apart from the faulty planning and preparations for his plot, Espinosa was hardly the charismatic and inspiring figure to mount a coup. During the planning, Espinosa was commandant of the AFP Joint Command and Staff College at headquarters, a post to which he was sidelined while the political crisis over Estrada was intensifying. Reyes had relieved him as commander of the strategic Southern Command after he had a brush with Lepeng Wee, an Estrada crony. Although Espinosa was commander of the Marines, his posting at the staff college was not strategic for rallying support from the strategic force commanders in the field.

In an unstable political environment conducive to coup conspiracies, the failed Espinosa coup plot ought to be a case study on why a coup succeeds or fails.

Helping mothers and their children

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WITHIN THE WOMEN'S movement, and even outside it, a common truism is that women could become "empowered" if they became economically independent. Give women the skills they need to find employment, and they will not only be freed from the control and domination of the men in their lives, they will also begin a journey toward self-respect, self-esteem and self-actualization.

While that is still largely true, what many forget is that employing women, without giving them the support services they need, would mean only adding to the many burdens they already bear. Women who work outside the home, especially if they are married and/or have children, have more than a full plate to carry throughout the day.

Obviously, the answer is not just jobs or income-generating opportunities for women, though earning one's own income can certainly boost a woman's morale. To complete the picture, women also need help with housework and childcare, enough leisure time to look after their own needs, and a supportive political and social environment that has more than enough room for women taking active part in public life.

* * *

FOR about seven years now, I have sat on the board of the Kapatiran Women's Support Center (KWSC) in Rosario, Cavite. KWSC started out as an innovative approach to the organization of women workers in eco-zones, whose fluctuating numbers and fluid working hours (not to mention the hostility of their employers) make traditional organizing through labor unions difficult and unwieldy.

Through the organizing work of the National Federation of Labor (NFL) and an initial grant from Oxfam in Hong Kong, KWSC was initially set up in Rosario to provide women workers a place to gather after work, share experiences and undergo gender-awareness and other skills training. A similar center was established in Gen. Santos City, in answer to the needs of the young women workers who dominate the canning factories, but financial constraints, and the difficulties encountered in organizing a body of workers subject to seasonal employment, led to the GenSan center's closure.

Over the last few years, the board and management of KWSC realized the need "not only for a women's center among women workers but also for a child care center for women (and also men) workers with preschool children to enable them to pursue gainful work while assured of safe, quality and affordable child care services."

Today, much of the work of the KWSC staff centers on the children. The child care center has established a niche in the community by providing affordable and quality child care services for, on average, 18 children, ages 1.5 to 4 years old. I say "average," because the number of children in the center varies from day to day. Though the center and the staff can accommodate a maximum of 30 children, the staff have no way of knowing how many children will be brought to them in a day, since some mothers may choose to keep a child at home, or send the child home to grandparents in the province.

The center, located in a one-floor house with a garden and fruit trees, charges P300 a month, most of which goes to salaries of caregivers, snacks and other needs. Still, some mothers have been forced to pull out their children against their will, usually because they could no longer afford the P300 monthly fee once their three-month contract runs out.

* * *

MANAGEMENT of the day-to-day affairs of KWSC rests in the hands of two intrepid women, both former factory workers: Melanie "Lanie" Gonzales, who used to work in tuna canning in GenSan, and Marilen Barte, who used to work in a garments firm.

At the KWSC board meeting the other day, we all had a rollicking time listening to Lanie's and Marilen's stories about the children under their care and the mothers they have to deal with. At times, the stories held such poignancy we had to struggle not to show our emotions.

The "ecozone culture" as Jurgette Honculada, chair of KWSC, puts it, breeds instability and insecurity in the lives of the women workers, who comprise about 80 percent of the more than 60,000 workers in the Cavite Ecozone. Because contracts are so short and demand erratic, the workers are hard put to stick by a schedule, while planning for the future is unheard of.

* * *

THOUGH the parents are expected to pick up the children after working hours, says Lanie, it's not unusual to have a child or two spend the night at the center. "Sometimes we tell the mothers to just call us when they have to go on forced overtime (to meet an urgent quota in garment firms), so we know when to expect them. Because while a child is with us, we have to wait up for the mother or father to come and fetch the child."

Lanie and Marilen fairly burst with envy when I told them about the daycare centers in the United States, where parents are charged $5 for the first 10 minutes of delay in picking up a child, and $1 for every minute after.

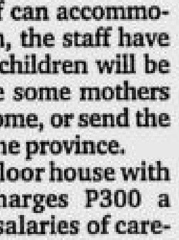
Through the years, Lanie and Marilen and the staff have found themselves having to do the unexpected and challenging, from toilet training a toddler to cleaning up a child's filthy mouth ("you'll be surprised how quickly children learn to pick up dirty words"), from teaching them meditation exercises to rushing a child burning up with fever to the health center.

But all their work has produced immeasurable gains. The children, it is reported, "are now cleaner, healthier, more emotionally open and articulate." Family relationships have also improved. Where before children were left in the province with grandparents or other kin, now the center allows working mothers time to interact and bond with their children. One truism is at least proved true: Help mothers and you end up helping their children, too.

Natural wonders in our forests

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



WOOD is something we encounter every day. Wood is so common that we see it but rarely take the time to notice.

After the landslides in Quezon last year and the talk on logging in the Philippines—legal and otherwise—you realize that much of our mountains have really been denuded. Look at our mountains and hills, once cool and green with forest cover now just bare, brown soil. There remains a great demand for Philippine hardwood when it is easier, cheaper and better for our forests to use imported wood like oak or cherry. Why deplete our forests when we can exhaust wood from other countries first?

Each time I enter a newly constructed home in one of the posh villages and notice the shiny hardwood floors, I cannot help but realize that the old sensibility, the *bahay-na-bato* syndrome or aesthetic, is still alive and well in the 21st century. The wood of choice is not narra or batikuling but molave, kamagong, balayong and other types now rare as the *santos* and colonial furniture made from them. As late as four decades ago, old, dry and aged Philippine hardwood was turned into elegant pieces of sculpture by modern masters Napoleon Abueva and Arturo Luz, both National Artists, and younger wood artisans who make wonderful modern furniture: Osmundo Esguerra, Claude Tayag and Benji Reyes.

Different types of Philippine wood are described in Jean Mallat's two-volume work on the Philippines published in Paris in 1846. Reading the catalogue of different types of wood he found in Ilocos made me realize that this work was more than a travel guide for the would-be tourist who was brave enough to go beyond Europe into lesser known parts of Asia. Mallat provided a guide for businessmen who wanted to invest in the Philippines or Philippine products. He also provided the native names of the wood because many of them did not have scientific names at the time so he mentioned wood I never heard of: ulis, calantas, canaren, arangen, marumpir, maraquitel, saimayen, bio, diran, lanuti, barangoan, lilisen, etc.

Mallat even provided specific uses for specific types of wood: Molave was good for framing and pilings because it was incorruptible. Mangachapuy was made to grow long and high and made into masts for Chinese sampans. Guijo or lauaan was made into beam-ends and even the keels of galleons. So hard was this wood that cannon balls hardly scratched them. Narra then as now was good for furniture. Tindalo was made into magnificent tables (probably those altar tables that now sell for over P1 million each). Lumban and batacang when polished were so beautiful they were made into tables and boats. Banaba was used for flooring both in houses and ships. Taculao and parunapin were made into keels of ships, gatasan into rafters of houses. Bacalao was made into anchors, Dignee and mabolo were heavy woods that resembled ebony: they were black or had black streaks and were made into combs.

Certain types of wood had other uses than being made into chairs, stools and tables. Anteng when burned was like incense. The trunk of ibbey or mountain-fig would miraculously tame the most furious bull or buffalo if you tied it to the tree. The bark of adaan, when pulverized and thrown into a river, killed all the fish and made fishing easier. (One wonders though if the poison did not affect humans.) Amboyan was made for frames, its bark produced bleach for the laundry and when burned its ashes were a substitute for soap. Oplas and asperilla leaves were used to polish wood and the balete, which in Philippine folklore is said to be the home of supernatural creatures, provided good timber. Its leaves and bark could be made into loin clothes or bahag.

Baroan and bangsanga could be made into timber, and if you had an enemy, the sap from their trunks when applied on the skin caused it to swell, and I presume, itch or burn. Balanac when burned was said to produce smoke that killed people within a radius of four to five *varas*. I am curious about the bagao which was described as: "a majestic tree under which the Indios used to hold their [precolonial] religious ceremonies; its fruit, bigger than an apple, has a tender flesh and a pleasant taste; it is eaten fully ripe; when it is ripe, it is as intoxicating as the strongest wine. The fruit also provides an oil used as mordant for making color take on cotton that is being tinted."

Mallat seems to have gone around and done some research because aside from trees he mentioned some medicinal plants on which he provided personal, first-hand information. Leaves of coscosipa chewed and applied was a cure for boils. Bani leaves mixed with vinegar (of course, nothing less than the strong *sukang Iloco*) prevented diseases like smallpox if one rubbed it on the body. Macabuhay was a vine whose bark had tubers that when taken as a decoction cured fever and stomach trouble. Powdered and dried in an oven, it was used to treat ulcers of the palate. Mallat did not realize that the name of the plant, *"makabuhay"*, was perhaps a clue to its properties. He saw the cures made with this plant and recommended it highly.

Old books like Mallat's are often ignored in libraries because they contain obsolete or useless information. Perhaps we should read them again if only to appreciate what natural wonders remain in our midst.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Compassion, courage and war

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

IT was good to see two columns yesterday, from Ceres Doyo and Manuel Quezon III, about the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, one of several Nazi concentration camps where Jews and other "social undesirables" (for example, Gypsies, communists and homosexuals) were incarcerated and executed.

Some time back, I wrote about the need for more activities in the Philippines to commemorate many important events that eventually brought an end to World War II. That column also dealt with the cowardice and cruelty that come with war, and not necessarily from the "bad guys" alone, i.e., the Japanese and the Germans.

The memorial activities around Auschwitz reminded me about the need to write about the other faces of war, about courage and compassion, in particular. This is especially important for the Philippines, where the public commemorations seem to be limited to defeats (e.g., the Fall of Bataan and the Fall of Corregidor) followed by relative silence about Filipino resistance to the Japanese occupation, including the important role of the Hukbalahap. It's almost as if those years didn't matter until, voila, the Americans returned to "liberate" us.

True grit

Sure, we get an occasional action film glorifying some guerrilla hero. Ferdinand Marcos, for one, made sure his biographical movie had him looming large as a fearless resistance leader. It later turned out that those stories were pretty much fabricated.

The other action films reduce the war to an exchange of gunfire, with actors jumping in and out of trenches and annihilating the enemy by the dozens. The Americans produced many more of these action films and I remember growing up on a fare of "Combat," a long-running television series with Vic Morrow and others winning battle after battle against the Germans.

Much too little is said about other heroes: the women and men who did their share not necessarily by bearing arms. I've written about the Christmas when Germans and Allied Forces declared, on their own, a ceasefire, serenading each other with Christmas carols. Now that's courage, too.

We read about the Dutch family that hid a young Jewish girl, Anne Frank, throughout the war. It turns out that they were only one of many families that took similar risks.

Recently there was the story of a young Italian doctor who had several Jews confined to the hospital where he worked and taught them to feign some mystery respiratory illness which he described to the Germans as highly infectious. That ploy effectively kept the Germans away, saving the Jews.

I'd like to hear more local stories of true grit, of how guerrillas and other underground fighters were kept hidden and protected by the civilian population, and how civilians contributed to the network of couriers and people who delivered food and arms to the fighters.

Heroes, too, were those who kept hospitals and schools running. I am certain there are many lost stories about the doctors and health professionals who found ways to treat guerrilla fighters, and also improvised and used their scarce resources to continue serving the public.

Many years back, while doing research on medicinal plants, I found a compilation of herbal remedies prepared by the late Dr. Jaime Zaguirre which they used at the Philippine General Hospital. That included coconut water as dextrose. They had to be careful in choosing the coconuts, which couldn't be too young or too old because there was a specific level of minerals like potassium and sodium that was needed. Now that's heroism, too.

Compassion

An important case needs to be made, in the retelling of stories from war, that courage always involves fear. It is overcoming fear that spells valor. And if we learn to understand that, we will then be more alert as well to the many instances of compassion that were exhibited during the war.

It was compassion that pushed entire villages to protect Jewish neighbors. Remember that anti-Semitism was widespread in Europe even before the Nazis' rise to power, so it was a triumph of the human spirit whenever non-Jews sheltered Jews.

I'm also intrigued by the emergence of stories of how soldiers transcended war's vicious division of humanity into "allies" and "enemies." I've mentioned that Christmas when troops in Europe declared their own peace.

In his book "the Road to Abu Ghraib," Jon Ronson writes about how during World War II and the Vietnam War, American soldiers often did not fire at the enemy. He cites studies by the military historian General SLA Marshall, who interviewed thousands of American infantrymen who served during World War II, and estimates only 15 to 20 percent of these soldiers actually shot to kill. The others would not fire at all, or fired too high.

Such accounts force us to think harder about who we are as humans. After all, to have the compassion not to shoot at the enemy may have been even more courageous an act than pulling the trigger.

I am sure there are also stories of compassion within concentration camps, of inmates helping each other, maybe even of kindly guards and wardens. Some of those stories do make us reflect on how complicated humans can be, as in the case of the prisoners in Auschwitz whose lives were spared because they could play classical music. They played on orders of the Nazi camp wardens. Was it compassion? Maybe yes, maybe no, but one needs to think, too, of how the musicians lived with the stress of having to perform or die.

There are war stories that will never be told, since the survivors are now long dead. But if we tried a bit harder, we might be able to save some of those stories, from actual tales of the survivors (including our own elderly) or from their letters and diaries. The documentary series "Color of War" had a final episode on how the Allied Forces stormed through Europe and defeated the Germans in battle after battle. And yet the most powerful scene wasn't the victory marches but of a sound bite reading from a soldier's letter, full of excitement about imminent victory and yet warning: "We must not gloat."

Retrieving the vignettes and tales of cowardice and cruelty, courage and compassion, we might be better able to prevent that ultimate human inanity called war.

Tune in to the BBC specials about Auschwitz on Saturday at 2:30 p.m, and Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., including a special, "Playing to Survive," following Anita Lasken-Wallfisch, a member of the Ladies Orchestra that saved her life, as she revisits Auschwitz.

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PNP teeming with psycho cops?

THE ASTONISHING statement of Director General Edgar Aglipay, chief of the Philippine National Police, that the tragic Kalibo massacre is an isolated incident runs counter to what is actually happening.

Recently, the case of a police official making death threats against a pastor was brought personally to his attention. Complaints about policemen who go on a rampage, shooting and mauling innocent civilians, are so rampant they fill the exposé stories of newsmen like Ramon Tulfo. Add to this the irrefutable videotaped evidence of cops caught red-handed snorting shabu or gang-raping minors under their custody, and you ask why these horrible images of the PNP stick in the public mind.

Count among these incidents our personal experience. At the Jamboree organized by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) held in Makiling, Laguna last Dec. 30, 2004, we saw policemen at the Public Assistance Station rudely attend to anxious parents requesting entry to visit their children. When our turn came, we explained that we were from the Pagasa (weather bureau) to take our exhibits back to Manila that afternoon. Confident that we could not possibly encounter any problems since we were conducting government business, we presented our ID passes designating us in bold letters as "Jamboree Staff" (the same as those issued to the policemen).

To our shock, the police officer in charge sneered: "*Di kayo makakapasok, balewala ang passes ninyo. Taga*-Pagasa *ba kayo? Wala talaga kayong kapaga-pagasa. Mamayang alas 11 ng gabi na lang kayo bumalik* (You can't go in, your passes are nothing. You're from Pagasa? You're really hopeless! You just come back at 11 p.m.)!" Like a pack of laughing hyenas, they mocked and ridiculed a government agency with a barrage of defamatory outburst and subjected us to public humiliation for no apparent reason.

We did not allow ourselves to be provoked. We contacted the BSP coordinator on our cell phones. Yet, even after the BSP had given instructions to let us through, they still detained us. Only after we contacted their superior, a certain Magtibay, were we allowed to get into the Jamboree site. We went straight to the BSP coordinator to ask why the pullout of our exhibit that afternoon was rescheduled at 11 p.m. He gave us a puzzled look and denied such instructions were issued.

Obviously, the policemen tried to delay us out of some psychotic sense of humor, knowing we would be deprived of sleep and rest on the long drive back to Manila. Probably, these "psycho cops" were gleefully hoping to indirectly kill us in a vehicular accident.

In the future, we hope the Jamboree organizers will no longer rely on these people who exhibit disturbing mental behavior and who obviously don't even know the meaning of "public assistance."

—EFREN S. MARQUEZ
and REY K. LIRIOS,
public information and
international affairs staff,
Pagasa Central Office,
1/F Science Garden,
Agham Road, Quezon City

CHR also prosecutes lawless armed groups

IT may be observed that the opinion expressed in the letter "Selective Human Rights Commission" (PDI, 1/13/05) was a very sweeping statement. It cast doubt on the performance of the CHR and, thus, might have undermined public trust and confidence in this government office.

Records will bear out that several cases of blatant and gross human rights violations committed by the Abu Sayyaf and other lawless armed groups have been investigated, resolved and referred to the proper judicial and quasi-judicial bodies which have jurisdiction over them. Interested parties, if they want to, are given easy access to the records of these cases, for reference and information—in the spirit of transparency.

These cases include the Cabatangan siege and looting in Zamboanga City, the Ipil pillage, Tumahubong kidnapping (Fr. Rhoel Gallardo's killing), Lamitan siege, Siocon siege, Bolobo beheadings, Kalawit massacre, among others.

Of the cases that had been brought to the attention of this regional office, 35 probably involve members of the Abu Sayyaf, the Moro National Liberation Front, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and lawless armed groups (lost commands). The 35 cases do not include those involving government forces, which incidentally, are more numerous.

We hope that the letter-writer (name withheld upon request) could pay our office a visit and browse through our case records so he could dispel his doubts about our performance.

—MANUEL S. MAMAUAG,
director 4,
Commission on Human Rights,
Western Mindanao Region Office,
Zamboanga City

LETTERS

2004 SSS pensions sent

THIS pertains to the letter "SSS in financial crisis, or simply inefficient?" (PDI, 12/31/04)

In his letter, Eduardo G. Gacuya said: "Unfortunately, as of this writing, I still have to receive my SSS ID card. I have yet to receive my pension for the month of September, October and November. It's already December and I am afraid I will not receive my December pension, too."

Records show that Gacuya's monthly pensions up to December 2004 had been remitted to his savings account with the Philippine National Bank, Tabuk Branch.

His pension was suspended (pending confirmation) under a program that requires the pensioner to contact the Social Security System to verify his membership and ensure that he gets the proper benefits at the right time.

In December 2004, the SSS suspended the program and reviewed its implementation. Gacuya can expect his pension to be reactivated by Feb. 15, 2005. His pension for January and February 2005 will be credited to his account on that date.

Our records also show that Gacuya's ID was mailed to him on Dec. 10, 2004.

We are aware of the plight of our pensioners and how they rely on their pensions for their medical expenses and other needs. Please be assured that the SSS is working hard to strengthen the life of the fund and ensure that all its members get the right benefits at the right time.

—JOEL P. PALACIOS,
assistant vice president,
Media Affairs,
Social Security System,
East Avenue, Diliman, QC

A historical irony

IT is ironic that within our military camp in Fort Bonifacio, a main street is named in honor of Gen. Henry Lawton, the famed captor of the legendary native American Apache leader Geronimo, who outfoxed the American Army in many battles of resistance against the white Americans' forcible occupation of native American Indian lands. Reaching the highest point of his military career with the capture of the Apache chief, Lawton was ordered by President William McKinley to destroy the Filipino armed struggle for independence.

In his book, "History of the Filipino People," Teodoro A. Agoncillo narrates: "MacArthur wanted to pursue Aguinaldo, but General Otis ordered him to take a rest in Malolos. Meantime, General Lawton moved swiftly to the south, capturing Zapote, Bacoor, and Dasmariñas, all in Cavite. On the other hand, General Wheaton, aided by gunboats, successively captured Las Piñas and Parañaque, in Morong, and Santa Cruz, Paete, and other towns of Laguna. But the Americans were not always victorious. On March 25, Filipinos made a good account of themselves when they repulsed General Wheaton at Polo and killed Colonel Egbert. In Quingua (Plaridel), on April 23, the American cavalry under Major Bell suffered a defeat in the hands of General Gregorio del Pilar. In this battle, the Americans suffered heavy casualties, including Colonel Stotsenberg who was killed in battle. On December 18, 1899, the Filipinos under General Licerio Geronimo routed the Americans under General Lawton, who was killed in the battle of San Mateo."

Herein lies the mocking irony of history. Lawton, the conqueror of Indian Apache chief Geronimo was himself killed by a Filipino freedom fighter, Gen. Licerio Geronimo.

Why honor within our Armed Forces military camp at Fort Bonifacio an American who fought to deny us our freedom? Why not instead honor our Filipino general, Licerio Geronimo, who fought to defend and obtain our independence?

Rename Lawton Street to Gen. Licerio Geronimo Street in Fort Bonifacio.

—LEONARD DE VERA,
spokesperson,
E-Just, Equal Justice
for All Movement

Crime-infested corner

LET me call the attention of the Philippine National Police precinct which has jurisdiction of the Edsa-Buendia intersection.

I do understand that we are in an economic slump, and it is but logical that the crime rate goes up at these times.

I do believe that most of our countrymen who are experiencing utmost poverty are doing their best to survive. That is why it brings smile to my lips whenever I hear people complaining about the hard times and yet breaking their backs to keep their families alive.

What I don't like are those who want instant "compensation"—if I may call that—at the expense of others.

I have been held up at knife's point for the first time. I lost my cell phone and bracelet (a Christmas gift from my wife). The place is the Edsa-Buendia corner, northbound side, just below the pedestrian overpass of the MRT station. I have heard that the area is fast becoming notorious because of similar incidents.

I suggest increasing police visibility in that area especially at nighttime.

—JON GONZALES,
4/F PDAF Bldg., Buendia Ave.,
Bel-Air, Makati City

On 'wet-flag' campaign

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

I WAS somewhat aghast at the reaction of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and the other mayors to the latest efforts of Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani "BF" Fernando to ease traffic in Metro Manila. Mayor Binay was once the chair of the MMDA, but I can't recall any notable project he did then.

But look at Fernando's accomplishment now. Just go to Cubao, particularly at the corner of Edsa and Aurora Boulevard. Wow! I would say, "*ang galing* (excellent)"! If only for what he has done in Cubao, I would vote for Fernando for any political position. *Talagang may nagagawa 'yung tao* (The guy can really do something). What about the other mayors of Metro Manila?—**Avelino U. Falcon, Legal Dept., Saudi Aramco Gulf Operations, P.O. Box 256, Al-Khafji 31971, Saudi Arabia**

* * *

I applaud the efforts of Fernando in trying to instill into the minds of our pedestrians and drivers some semblance of discipline. This is long overdue, and I do support his efforts.

However, I have a suggestion with regard to the taking of pictures of vehicles violating traffic rules. Please don't leave this function in the hands of traffic aides so that the picture-taking would be free from "human error" which could only become a source of contention.

Secondly, the "wet-rag" drive might cause some poor folk and pedestrians to get sick. Just imagine somebody contaminating the wet rag with a contagious virus, and there you are, the next one to get hit by the rag. There are other laws to properly enforce our traffic rules.—**Aldrin Cave, 7708 Midday Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306 USA**

* * *

The "wet-rag" plan is socially correct. I would prefer that, if the alternative is getting arrested and fined. It is also less expensive for the government. I love what Fernando has been doing for Metro Manila. He is one who thinks outside the box and is very productive in that sense. I wish our leaders would emulate Fernando.—**Jose Orozco, Calamba, Laguna**

* * *

Obviously, the ones who oppose the "wet-flag" campaign are a bunch of KSP (*kulang sa pansin*—hankering for attention).

I also find ridiculous the invitation of the Commission on Human Rights to those who are "victimized" by the wet-flag drive to file a case with that agency. Is the CHR chair that publicity hungry?

To our "*kababayans*," please cooperate. If we find the wet-flag approach barbaric, then the simple solution is to discipline ourselves. One word is enough for a wise person. But when all "diplomacy" has been exhausted, then it's time to wave the wet flag.—**Simon Serrano, Unit B81B Gueventville-II, Libertad Street, Mandaluyong City**

* * *

I certainly agree that we need a hundred more Fernandos in our government to methodically make our country a better, safer and more agreeable place to live in. Fernando is untiringly searching for ways and means (some efficient, some not) to make us aware of our obligation to properly use our public roads and sidewalks.

Those who have been to civilized countries—like the one where I live now (the Principality of Monaco) must have noticed that Filipinos there are well-behaved and are well-disciplined and they observe road courtesy.

Disciplining Manilans looks like an impossible dream.

Many politicians, "pseudo-heroes" who pretend to champion the cause of the poor and defend human rights, think the MMDA's "wet-flag" drive is barbaric when, in fact, they don't know what barbaric means.—**Lisa Manuel, 7 Rue St. Augustin 06300 Nice, France**

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FAN

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

A female student from Vigan City tries out this garment made of *buri*, which is exclusively used for manufacturing fans. The student performed for the city's fourth longganiza festival.

Brunei exec in Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—Brunei Darussalam's defense minister arrived here yesterday to visit his country's peacekeeping troops in Mindanao.

Brunei Darussalam Defense Minister Yang Berhormat Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Singamateri arrived with Brunei defense permanent secretary Datu Paduka Haji Mohamad Yasmin bin Haji Umar at the Cotabato airport on board a Brunei jetliner.

Brunei has sent a 10-man peacekeeping force as part of the International Monitoring Team that monitors the implementation of the government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front ceasefire agreement.

Last November, Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Dato Sri Mhod Najib bin tun Haji Mohammad Abdul Razak visited the 50-man Malaysian peacekeepers here.

Eid Kabalu, speaking for the MILF, said the visit was a clear manifestation of Brunei's concern on the peace process. The visit came as both sides prepare for the resumption of formal peace negotiations next month in Kuala Lumpur. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

21 DENR men suspended following lumber seizure

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Connie Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Environment Secretary Mike Defensor yesterday ordered the 90-day suspension of at least 21 environment personnel in Cebu and Davao Oriental pending investigation of their liability in the smuggling of P4.5 million worth of illegally cut lumber seized in Mandaue City on Monday.

Suspended were 12 personnel of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) and Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Cebu and nine from Davao Oriental.

Defensor said these Penro and Cenro personnel would face administrative charges for gross negligence in the performance of duty for the smuggling of the 208 board feet of lumber from Baganga town in Davao Oriental to Mandaue City.

Ironically, the Penro and Cenro officials had been working overtime in preparing the report on the confiscation in time for the secretary's arrival only to be told that they were ordered suspended.

"That's our prize for doing good," said Cebu Penro officer Richard Abella after Defensor announced their preventive suspension.

Defensor told a news conference that he believed that there was connivance among the personnel to make it appear that that shipment of logs was legal.

Sources told the INQUIRER that two ranking officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Southern Mindanao and another Penro official were among those preventively suspended. But Defensor did not mention their names during the news conference yesterday.

Among the environment personnel in Cebu who were suspended were Penro-Cebu officer Richard Abella, Penro forest specialist Aldrech Rasma, Cenro officer Fedencio Carreon, Cenro forest specialist Restituto Gonas, Cenro chief utilization section Nolito Lapinig, Cenro forest protection section chief Raul Pasok, Cenro clearing officer Jaime Calo and scaler Marciano Grejaldo.

Four forest rangers in Cenro Cebu were also suspended. They were Leonardo de los Reyes, Felipe Labajo, Allan Durano and Domingo Survellia.

The nine suspended from Davao Oriental were Cenro officer Julius Valdez, scaler Dante Rivera, foresters Emmanuel Arreza and Eusebio Bojos, and the forest rangers Nilo Basingan, Raulito Alouro, Jaime Espinosa, Modesto Padre and Robario Natalio.

DENR warns steel plant of closure for pollution

IMUS, Cavite—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has warned Sonic Steel Industries Inc. (SSII) of possible suspension or cancellation of its environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for serious violations of environmental protection laws arising from its operations.

SSII is a steel processing and manufacturing plant in Barangay Hugo Perez in Trece Martires town, Cavite.

Luciano Hornilla, DENR acting director in the Calabarzon region, said SSII had continuously ignored an order stipulated in its ECC to put up an Environmental Monitoring Fund and create a Multi-Partite Monitoring Team to monitor air, noise and wastewater emissions of its plant.

The INQUIRER called up the Office of the Mayor of Trece Martires and the local police office to get the phone number of SSII for its side but the two local offices claimed that the company was not listed in their directories.

SSII's ECC was granted on June 5, 1997. Without an ECC, a firm cannot continue to operate.

DENR's warning came after a visit of a multi-sectoral fact-finding team to SSII's plant in Barangay Hugo Perez in Trece Martires town, Cavite last Jan. 5.

The investigation stemmed from a report of the environmentalist group Earth Savers Movement after local residents complained of health hazards posed by SSII's factory.

The report was submitted to Hornilla by DENR provincial officer Judaline Fabro, environmental impact evaluation chief Adan Umipig and pollution control division officer in charge Jessie Conde.

The investigating team reported that SSII had not installed a wastewater treatment facility to address environment pollution problems resulting from its operations.

"Wastewater generated by the firm is being stored in a container tank in the meantime that the firm is in the process of constructing its wastewater treatment facility," the team's report said.

The plant, which manufactures galvanized iron sheets, reportedly turns out 15 gallons of wastewater containing alkali and acid solutions which are considered toxic and hazardous as these substances cause itchiness and skin irritations.

It was still unclear how Sonic gets rid of its wastewater after the storage tank has been filled up. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

C. De Oro City Hall up for sale for ₱800M

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—This city's mayor has come under fire for a plan to sell the historical site and building of the city hall for P800 million.

The plan to sell the city hall has created uproar from various groups, who vowed to stop it before Mayor Vicente Emano erases another historical heritage of the city.

Emano wants to sell the city government property to finance the construction of a new city hall complex on a 17-hectare property in Upper Dagong in Barangay Carmen.

The city hall is in front of the Cathedral Church and stands near the Cagayan de Oro River. It was built in 1940. It has two main buildings, the Executive House, where Emano holds office, and the Serina Hall which houses various departments.

The city government held the first of a series of public consultations on Tuesday.

The city hall property was the site where Spanish Governor General Jose Sta. Romana built the Casa Real in 1899. It was there that the Aguinaldo revolutionary government was first proclaimed on Jan. 10, 1899. It was also there that the Philippine flag was first raised. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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CHR sets separate probe of cop's shooting rampage

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Commission on Human Rights in Negros Occidental will conduct an independent investigation of the murderous rampage by a policeman in Kalibo, Aklan during the Ati-atihan Festival last Jan. 16.

Romeo Baldevarona, CHR-Negros acting chief, said his office was acting on the request of the family of PO1 Jonathan Moreño.

"The CHR will investigate the killing of Moreño and the other victims to determine if any human rights violations were committed before, during and after the incident," he said.

Moreño went on a shooting rampage at the height of the Ati-atihan Festival and killed six persons, including his boss Supt. Odelardo Magaynes, acting Aklan police director, and Chief Insp. Manuel Ilejay Jr., Kalibo police chief.

At least 30 persons were wounded, most of them bystanders and merrymakers, before Moreño was gunned down by his fellow policemen.

The police were conducting an investigation to determine what drove Moreño to go berserk. Among the angles being looked into was that Moreño cracked due to pressure exerted by fellow officers working for an alleged drug lord.

But his widow, Ma. Hitzhel, and mother, Ninfa, went to the CHR office here on Wednesday to ask the office to conduct an independent investigation.

"We want an independent investigating body to tell us what really happened," Ma. Hitzhel Moreño told the INQUIRER.

She said they also asked the CHR to help facilitate an independent autopsy of her husband's body after the National Bureau of Investigation told them that a court order was needed for the agency to conduct another autopsy.

Hitzhel was concerned that her husband's uniform bore many bullet holes in the back and in the buttocks when the Aklan municipal office report showed that he died of gunshot wounds in the left and right sides of the abdomen.

She said the bullet holes on the uniform seemed to indicate that the person or persons who shot Moreño intended to finish him off.

Arnel Sigue, NBI Bacolod special agent, said police have already conducted an autopsy of Moreño's body.

To conduct another autopsy, he added, would already require a court order. "The NBI Bacolod is requesting a copy of the autopsy report from the Philippine National Police," he said.

Faith healers feel left out

BAGUIO CITY—Felt left out from the government's medical tourism program, the faith healers of Baguio said they could bring foreign tourists by themselves.

"For three straight years in the 1970s, we were the No. 1 dollar earners for the region," said Martin Caoili, vice president of the Baguio Healers Association.

"When the city was having this problem with meningococcemia, we were the ones who persuaded our patients to visit us here in Baguio," said Caoili.

BHA members said they felt slighted when Purificacion Molintas, Cordillera director of the Department of Tourism, said they should be registered to be included in the DOT's medical tourism program.

Former Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan conceived the program to showcase "cost-effective medical treatments combined with special itineraries that would highlight some of the best tourist attractions the country has to offer."

The program is for foreign tourists "willing to undergo minimally invasive medical procedures and treatments."

Among the medical institutions included were St. Luke's Medical Hospital, Capitol Medical Center and Medical City, all in Metro Manila.

For Cordillera, Molintas mentioned spa resorts and the traditional Bontoc massage.

"For faith healers, they have to be registered first," she said.

"How can you register healing? Healing is God-given and not taught in schools," Caoili said.

"Healing is divine. Magnetic healing is unexplainable but effective," said Placido Palitayan, vice president of the Philippine Healers Circle.

He said during the time of the late Tourism Secretary Jose Aspiras in the 1970s, faith healing in Baguio was encouraged.

"The Philippine Airlines even coordinated my schedule so that the foreign tour groups would know where I was," said Palitayan.

He said he used to have 100 patients a day. He said for one year in the 1970s, he had 17,000 patients from Australia alone. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Quezon town fire kills 3, hurts 1

LUCENA CITY—Three persons died and at least 50 commercial and residential buildings were razed in a three-hour fire in the coastal town of Calauag, Quezon early Thursday morning.

Supt. Leandro Lindain, Calauag municipal police office chief, identified the victims as Renalyn Mabulayan, 23; Ancheta Avendano, 27; and Aida Castro, 50—all helpers in Farmacia Limcuando in Barangay III at the town proper.

Lindain said the victims were trapped on the second floor of the two-story drugstore and residential building.

Police said the fire started at around 2:30 a.m.

It spread to four blocks in Barangay III and IV and burned several houses made of light materials.

The owner, a certain Dr. Cely Limcuando, also suffered injuries when she jumped from the terrace.

She suffered several fractured bones and injuries in different parts of the body.

Lindain said they could not yet determine the cause of the fire since the owner of the drugstore was still in a state of shock.

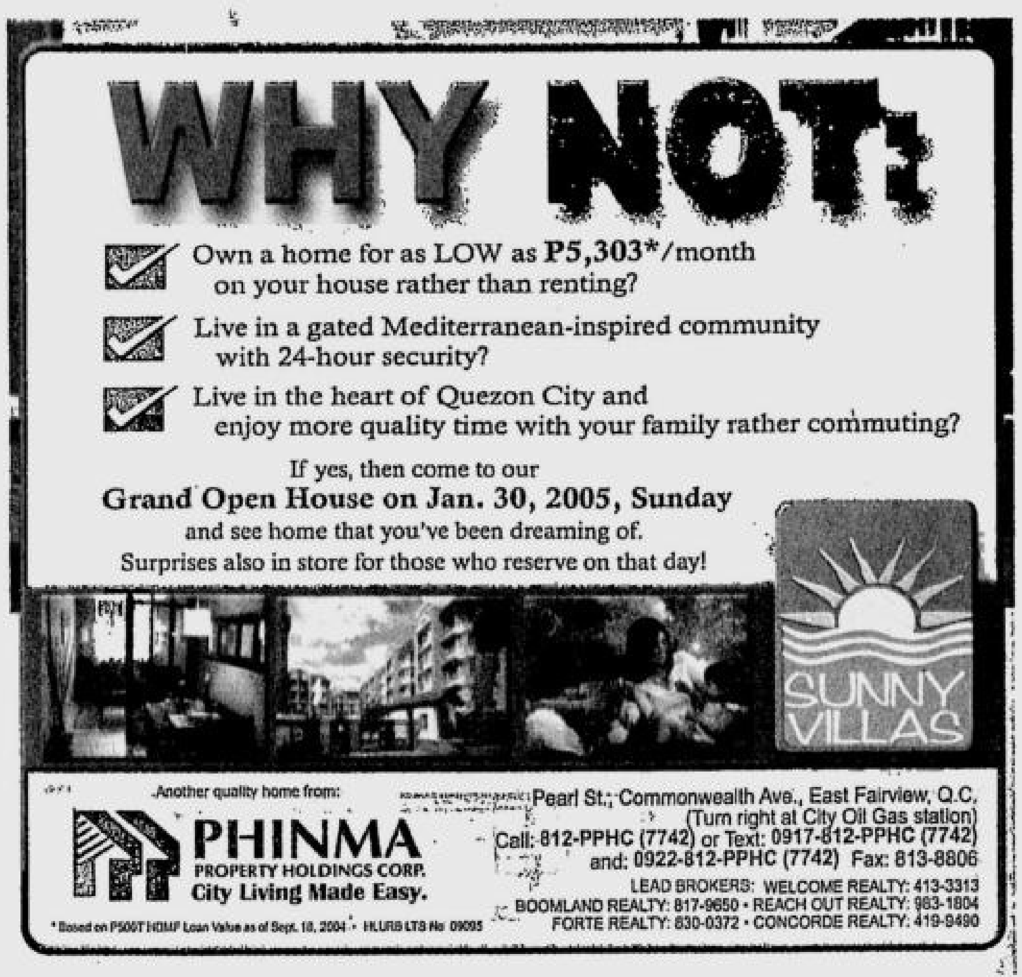
Henry Buzar, official of the Provincial Disaster and Coordinating Council who immediately rushed to Calauag, said lack of water helped spread the fire.

He said the town has no fire hydrants and the firemen only relied on seawater.

"But since it was low tide, getting water from the sea made it doubly difficult," he said in a phone interview.

Buzar said the town residents helped put the fire out by fetching water from their deep well pumps.

The PDCC estimated the damage at around P40 million. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*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Joker digs in to block VAT

From page A1

the VAT bill on Monday. The Senate is expected to end floor debates on the measure before the chamber starts its Easter break on March 18.

"We will be working doubletime. The senators are aware of the need to enact these revenue measures," said Drilon, principal author of Senate Bills 1838 and 1873 seeking to lift VAT exemptions and increase the rate from 10 to 12 percent.

But Arroyo said: "I am against it. I've already taken a position and I won't back out." He pointed out that even the American Chamber of Commerce had said that a 12-percent VAT on goods and services would be "very onerous to the poor."

Not Palace dummies

He also said that although the House passed the Value-Added Tax Restructuring Act (HB No. 3555) on third and final reading before dawn yesterday, senators allied with the administration were no dummies of Malacañang.

"We also decide for ourselves," said Arroyo, vice chair of the Senate ways and means committee. "Why are we so afraid that if we enforce the VAT against the oil companies, the latter would pass on the cost [to consumers]? If we enforce the VAT on independent power producers, they'll pass it on to consumers. It is as if we can't do anything anymore because we are scared of someone. We don't have freedom anymore. These are the things that we should [worry about]."

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan announced that the campaign against the VAT measure would now spill into the streets in the form of protest actions.

"The anti-VAT lawmakers were vastly outnumbered in the House. But we know that outside Congress, the numbers are in favor of them," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. "That is why we have to take this fight to the parliament of the streets."

Pro-poor amendments

The principal author of the controversial bill is not satisfied with how it turned out.

"I am quite disappointed. The amendments with which we had intended to spare our poor people were not able to make it in the bill," said Rep. Eric Singson (LP, Ilocos Sur), senior vice chair of the House ways and means committee.

Singson would have wanted an exemption for such items as milk, cooking oil, canned sardines and other food popular among the poor.

But he did not say that the bill had been railroaded by the administration-dominated chamber, and instead blamed the opposition for the House's failure to insert the pro-poor amendments.

Legal quandary

Singson said the walkout Wednesday night by 22 opposition lawmakers put the House leadership in a legal quandary as to whether it should proceed further into the stage of amendments.

He cited the constitutional provision saying that for a tax exemption to be approved, the same measure must get the majority vote of the House—or 119 out of 236.

"There was some confusion as to the number of congressmen on the floor because some of our colleagues were walking in and out of the session hall. If the amendment did not get 119 votes, it would be doomed," he said.

Singson said it was only later, when HB 3555 was put to the third and final reading, that it was determined that 126 congressmen had voted for it, against 11 dissenters.

'On a roll'

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo congratulated the House "for taking the lead in putting our fiscal house in order."

"This is an act of valiant civic duty that builds a better future to all Filipinos by growing the economy to create more jobs and push our 10-point pro-poor program," she said in a statement.

Ms Arroyo said the strong partnership between the executive and legislative branches of government was being "reinforced by a new economic team that will continue our policies and programs for the benefit of the average Filipino."

"The economy is on a roll and we shall continue to ensure that the most marginal sectors are shielded from short-term adversities by cushioning prices where the most telling social impact is expected," she said.

People will not bear burden

In an interview over dzMM, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said those opposed to the VAT measure were "using the argument that our masses will bear the burden" of the increase.

"No," he said, and insisted that the burden would be borne by those who had the means. "For instance, our middle and upper classes—those who often go to name restaurants and hotels and even eat there—of course they will have to bear the burden for that style of consumption.

"But our people, for example, those who can [only] afford to eat in *carinderias* or buy in public markets and *talipapas*, the VAT [increase] will not affect them."

Bunye maintained this position even if the House voted down the proposal to exempt canned goods, bread and noodles from the VAT increase, from which the government hopes to raise P50 billion. *Reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Carlito Pablo, Cynthia D. Balana, Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Norman Bordadora*

Impact of VAT Increase

Commodity	Price Inclusive of 10% VAT	Price Inclusive of 12% VAT	Price Increase (in Pesos)
Sardines (small can)	10.30	10.49	0.19
Powdered Milk (900g)	250.10	254.68	4.55
Liquid Milk (370 ml)	27.25	27.75	0.50
Refined Sugar (1 kilo)	28.80	29.32	0.52
Brown Sugar (1 kilo)	23.75	24.18	0.43
Noodles (small pack)	5.25	5.35	0.10
Corned Beef (small)	44.85	45.67	0.82
Cooking Oil (250 ml)	19.00	19.35	0.35
Prepaid Card			
w/o discount	300	305.45	5.45
w/ discount	290	295.27	5.27

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Noodles go up to P5.35, and other 'slight' hikes

From page A1

Among these benefits, she said, were bigger public funds for classrooms and immunization programs. "In the next few days we will have the data showing the gains," she said.

Soliman furnished the INQUIRER a price matrix of basic goods under a 12-percent VAT regime. The computations were done by the Department of Finance.

In the matrix, the cost of powdered milk (900g) will rise from P250.10 under the 10-percent VAT scheme to P254.68; liquid milk (370ml), from P27.25 to P27.75; refined sugar (1 kilo), from P28.80 to P29.32; brown sugar (1 kilo), from P23.75 to P24.18, and corned beef (small can), P44.85 to P45.67.

The militant fisherfolk alliance Pamalakaya said a 12-percent VAT on the costs of transporting fish from the ports to the market and the ice used to keep stocks fresh would result in a P15-P20 increase in the price of galunggong, the poor man's fish.

Galunggong

"If it is enacted into law, this shotgun piece of legislation will finally take away galunggong from the dining table of poor Filipinos," Pamalakaya national president Fernando Hicap said.

According to Hicap, President Macapagal-Arroyo promised two years ago to lower the price of galunggong.

"At that time, the price of galunggong was between P60 and P80 a kilo. Now the price stands at an average P100," he said.

Hicap pointed out that prior to the ratification of the 10-percent VAT law during the Ramos administration, galunggong cost only a little over P20 a kilo. He said the same applied to other fish products sold in markets nationwide.

But he clarified that the sharp increase in the prices of fish products was determined by monopolies and trading cartels. He said this would not benefit small fishermen whose harvests were underpriced.

P86.73 more

The research staff of Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said their own analysis and computations on the impact of the proposed VAT hike showed that poor families would have to shell out an additional P86.73 a month, as opposed to the DOF projection of P65.22 a month.

The party-list group defines the poor as those earning P8,333 a month, or P99,999 a year, whereas the DOF includes in the poor sector only those earning less than the minimum P5,000 a month, or P60,000 a year.

According to Bayan Muna, P8,333 monthly translates to P320 daily.

While the minimum wage in Metro Manila is pegged at P300, the decent cost of living has been placed at P602 a day, it said.

GMA 'classmate' wants old customs job back

From page A1

for amassing P92 million in alleged ill-gotten wealth and for failing the lifestyle check is fighting tooth and nail to regain her post at the Port of San Fernando, La Union.

The efforts of Alberta Iglesias to reclaim her old post have apparently so upset port personnel that they were able to collect only a fraction of about P50 million in targeted revenues this month.

To put an end to the costly standoff, Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan and incumbent port collector Juan Tan separately requested Marcelo to act on the graft case.

In a "confidential" letter dated Jan. 17, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, Bonoan said that the complaint against Iglesias was filed as long ago as Jan. 28, 2004, and that "an immediate resolution may be in order."

He also said that when the supposedly well-connected Iglesias' six-month suspension ended last Dec. 15, she made drastic moves that caused "tension and unrest" at the port.

Iglesias has reportedly been passing herself off as a classmate of President Macapagal-Arroyo's.

Out of proportion

Lawyers Leon L. Acuna and Troy Francis C. Pizarro of the Department of Finance's Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS) filed the case against Iglesias.

They said she had amassed "an amount of property and/or money manifestly out of proportion to her salary and to her lawful income."

With a monthly salary of P25,000, Iglesias had declared gross assets of P92 million and a net worth of P65 million.

The RIPS lawyers found that she had not submitted a Statement of Assets and Liabilities since 1990 and only started doing so when she began working at the Bureau of Customs in 2000.

They said she had also failed to declare two pieces of property, and declared three real estate assets as inheritance when she actually bought them, as proved by the deeds of sale.

Iglesias had described the graft charge as "unfair," saying she was "not even extravagant."

Nevertheless, she was suspended for violating provisions of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials and Employees, the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the Law on Forfeiture and Unlawfully Acquired Property, and the Revised Penal Code.

Cease and desist order

But after serving her suspension, Iglesias issued notices to Customs Commissioner George Jereos, personnel and other officers that she had assumed her functions as acting district collector of the San Fernando port, collector Tan said in his own letter to Marcelo.

In the Jan. 26 letter, a copy of which the INQUIRER obtained from sources at the Ombudsman, Tan said Iglesias continued to exercise authority as port head even after the DOF and Jereos had issued a "cease and desist" order against her.

Tan said Iglesias' "unlawful conduct" had "seriously hampered the operations of the port and greatly demoralized customs personnel due to the continuing confusion and increasing unrest."

He said the infighting had "drastic and adverse effects on the collection efforts of the port, to the extent that it was able to collect only P2.1 million from Jan. 1 to 15 out of the monthly target of more than P50 million."

Tan said the "early resolution" of the case against Iglesias would "restore order" at the port and would be "in the best interest of the service."

'Classmate'

Reached by phone yesterday afternoon, Tan told the INQUIRER that Iglesias had managed to get some port employees to her side by claiming that her family was close to Ms Arroyo, her father supposedly having been a member of the late President Diosdado Macapagal's Cabinet.

"She tells us, as well as officials at the [BOC] and the Ombudsman, that she was a classmate of the President at the Assumption College in Makati," Tan said.

INQUIRER sources at the Ombudsman also said Iglesias was "open" about her supposed closeness to the President.

Name-dropping

But Tan said a check with people close to both Ms Arroyo and Iglesias showed that the two were "schoolmates, at best."

"If they were close, the Ombudsman would not have suspended [Iglesias]," Tan said, adding that the latter had clearly been dropping the President's name.

In the graft complaint, Acuna and Pizarro said Iglesias was using Ms Arroyo's name to move up the promotion ladder.

They said she had a master's degree in business administration but told the President that it was a master's degree in customs administration.

"Aside from failing to file the required SALS and falsifying entries thereto, [she] made false representations about her education in letters to [the President], seeking promotion as collector of [the airport] customs house or deputy collector for passenger services, or collector of the port of Subic," they said.

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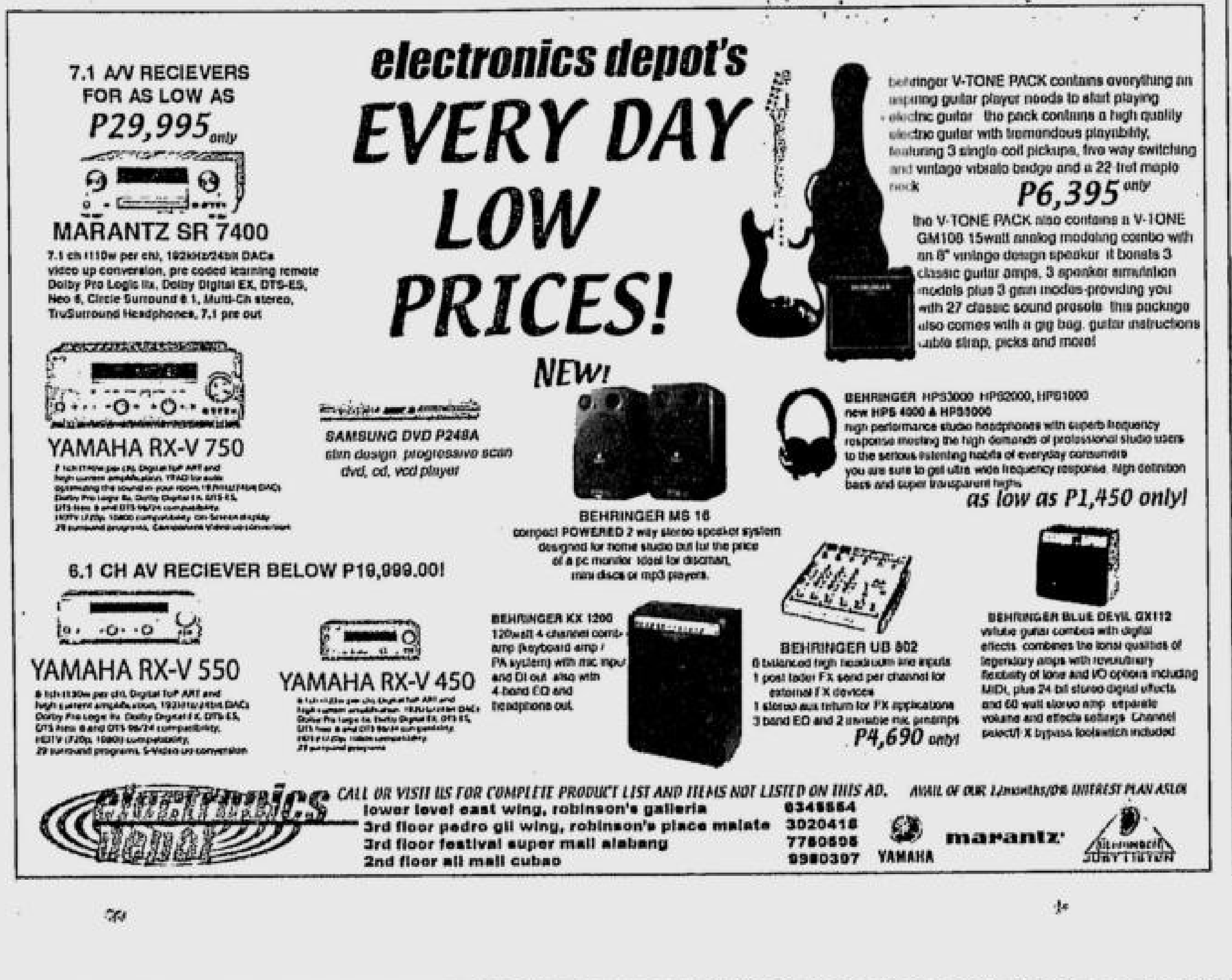
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Why power rates are high, and will go higher

From page A1

provisionally approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission last September. But the rate at which the NPC can recover all its costs and earn the legally allowed 8-percent profit in the Visayas grid is P4.59 per kWh. The Visayas rate, in other words, is a third below its "market" price.

Disputing gov't arithmetic

But militant groups and consumer interest groups dispute not only the government's arithmetic; they also score the principle behind the government's approach to the electric power industry.

"We don't need another rate increase because, first, prices are already high and the public cannot afford to pay higher rates. Second, this rate increase proposed by Napocor and implemented by Meralco and the ERC is only because they want to sell Napocor," said Giovanni Tapang, chair of the concerned scientists' group Agham.

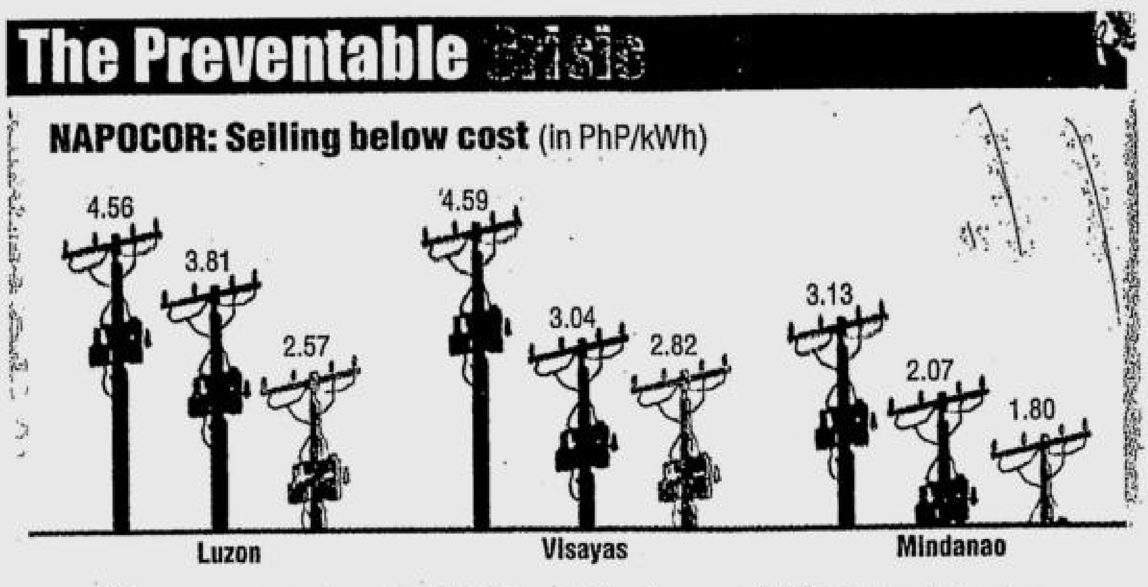
"The issue here is, 'Who should put up power generation, power transmission, and distribution in the country?'" Tapang said, in an InqTV interview conducted mainly in Filipino. The principle of privatizing the power sector was plain wrong, he said.

"The government wants to privatize everything, because in their view this is the reform the industry needs. But in our view, what the Filipino people need is to nationalize the power industry and not to sell it, because the only result will be never-ending rate increases," Tapang said.

Industry leaders share the government's assumption about the long-term benefits of privatization. "So over the short term you can see that the rates will go up, but over the medium term and the long term, once you have a successful privatization, you can see that the rates will come down," Federico Lopez, president of First Generation Holdings Corp., said at a briefing for INQUIRER editors. (His presentation can be viewed at www.inq7.net/power.)

Asian benchmark?

Not so, Tapang said. "This idea of privatization as the answer to everything, this will not result in lower rates. In fact, what will happen is rates will go up and continue to go up."



SOURCE: FIRST GENERATION; DOE

INQGRAPHIC: ESamba

Are our electricity rates among the highest in Asia? In an interview the weekend before he announced his resignation, Energy Secretary Vince Perez at first gave a qualified answer: "We are not the most expensive, we are not the third most expensive; we are in the middle," he said.

Then he gave a categorical one. "Of course, it's still expensive. Whatever we say, our electricity does not come cheap."

Why are rates high in the first place?

2 major reasons

Perez, whose resignation takes effect after March, offered two major reasons.

The first is a transmission problem.

"Electricity from a plant in Pangasinan cannot be used by a consumer in Mindanao," Perez said. He also noted that hydroelectric power in Mindanao could not be used by consumers in the Visayas. "They will not be able to enjoy cheaper electricity."

It takes a major investment in time and money to connect the Luzon grid, which in fact has an oversupply of power, to those in the Visayas and Mindanao. "Our country is an archipelago. We have 7,000 islands," Perez said, belaboring the obvious that is all too often overlooked. (But why is there an oversupply in Luzon? Because most of the independent power producers or IPPs contracted during the last power crisis set up shop in Luzon.)

The second reason, he said, is a generation limitation. "We aren't that rich yet in our oil or gas resources."

Resource-rich neighbors

In contrast, our nearest neighbors have considerable resources. Indonesia sources all its needs locally. Malaysia (85 percent indigenous sources) and Thailand (73 percent) are both largely energy-independent too. Import dependence, however, is not the only factor that drives rates. Taiwan and South Korea, for instance, rely almost completely on imports. But a substantial portion of their electricity is generated by nuclear power plants.

All five countries have industrial rates lower than those in the Philippines. In the case of Thailand, Taiwan and Korea, the rates are lower by almost half.

Building frenzy

But other factors have driven our rates up. Let us highlight only two more.

In a position paper posted—with a disclaimer—on the home page of the Napocor website (www.napocor.gov.ph), a former president of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) listed several factors which led to Napocor's financial implosion.

The first, Edgardo del Fonso wrote, is "a frenzied build-up in generation capacity—mostly through fast-tracked Build-Operate-Transfer contracts with IPPs. It was a program whose momentum carried it past signs of emerging overcapacity."

The public is paying for that overcapacity. The IPP contracts bound the government to pay for the capacity built, not the actual use of it. Lopez, whose family owns a few IPPs as well as Manila Electric Co., the country's largest distribution utility, used the analogy of a car loan to explain the difference. During the loan period, he said, the borrower pays the same interest on the car, regardless of whether the car was used for long-distance travel or stayed in the garage.

Optimistic demand forecasts

Lotilla, Del Fonso's successor as Psalm president, noted that capacity was built based on optimistic demand forecasts. "In 1998, all the projections about increases in the demand for electric power also went wrong because they were all projected to grow at a certain rate with growth in the economy, but unfortunately that did not come."

The Power Development Plan of 1993, Del Fonso wrote, forecast demand "to reach 8,274 MW by 1998; the actual [demand] was 6,666 MW, or a drop of 19 percent." The imbalance has continued. Lopez, for instance, presented a Meralco forecast based on 1994 growth projections by the National Economic and Development Authority showing that supply outstripped demand in 2003 by 1,380 MW.

Rates are high in part because the public must continue paying for this unused capacity.

Funded by loans

The building frenzy was fueled in part by the government's determination to prevent the return of brownouts. But by and large, it was funded by loans. Now Napocor's debt burden is one reason why new capacity to forestall any outages is difficult to contract.

"We have more than P1 trillion in Napocor assets," Perez said. "But over the last 60 years, the government gave Napocor only P27 billion in capital. The difference was paid for by borrowings to build plants, substations, transmission lines, hydroelectric dams. All of that, paid for by borrowings."

But Tapang would not have any of that.

"They say the government has no money, but we can see that in fact the government has a lot of money. But they spend it on war, on travel abroad. Why not use this to set up power plants instead? Our foreign debt is so big, and we pay it every year. Why not use this money first to put more better power generation [facilities], power transmission [systems] here in the Philippines, so we don't have to face a power crisis?"

Consumers' reaction

"If they push through with the higher rates that Napocor proposed and the other schemes that the ERC wants to implement, to pass all the costs of electricity to consumers, if this is what will happen, we will expect the consumer not to take this sitting down," Tapang warned.

How PNP officer's family lives without electricity in the city

From page A1

whose head is a middle-ranking police official sleeps through the night without the comfort of an air-con, or at the very least, an electric fan.

Even some of the poor in any squatters' area have cable TV, providing them with a steady stream of movies and 24-hour news from leading networks in the world.

This family, in stark contrast, listens to a radio powered by batteries. But they have a telephone line.

"It's like living in the province. But of course, we are in the middle of a city," says Gina.

Natural light, breeze

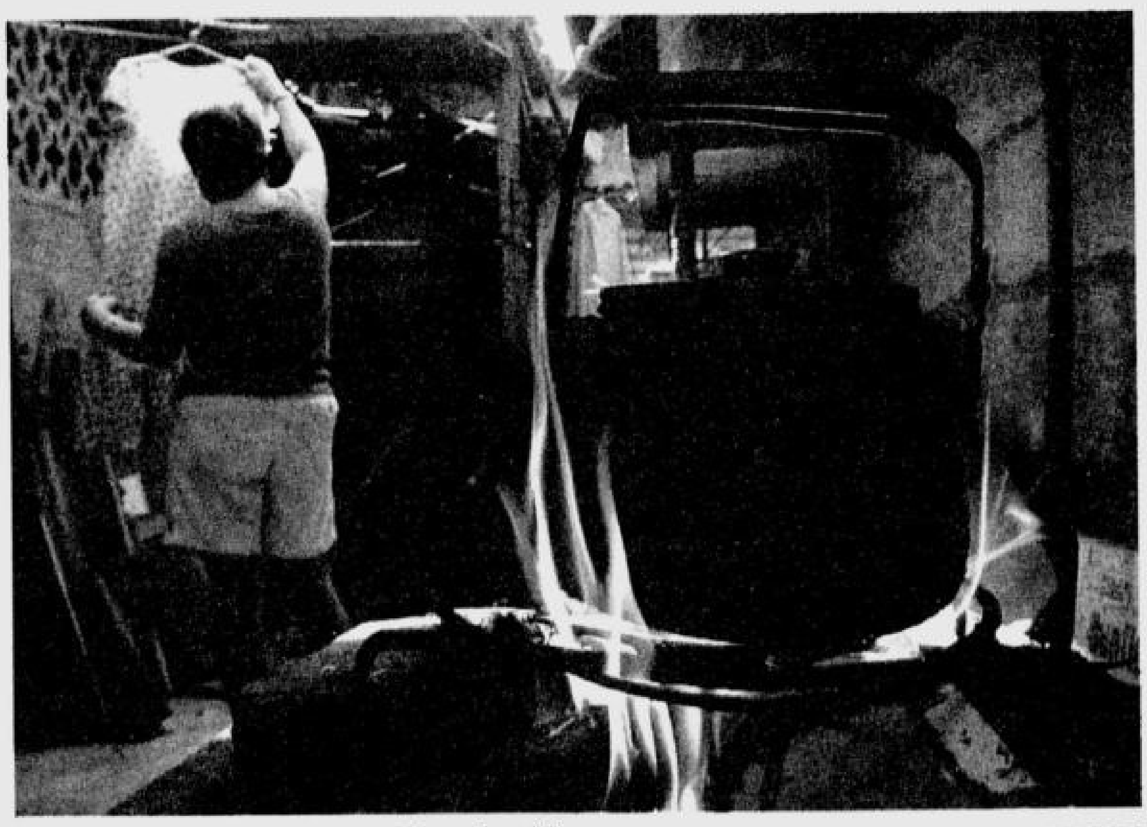
Inside the old wooden house, a light socket has long been abandoned by its incandescent bulb. It has gathered soot, like the corners of the ceiling.

Yet the house, because of its design and position, is well-lighted. The house has huge windows on the second floor, allowing the breeze to enter easily at any time of the day once they are opened. Windows on the ground floor also let the breeze in from the left side of the house.

"My husband is a senior superintendent (in the Philippine National Police), but we don't have electricity," she points out the irony with a hearty laugh. He works in Mindanao.

"(But) we still survive ... If you live like this, you'll learn to enjoy living like this. If you're ambitious, that will be difficult. You will look for things that you don't have," she tells the INQUIRER.

The house is in a working class district. As long as the sun is up, there is enough sunlight for reading. (Gina reads Filipino pocketbooks.)



IT CAN be done: To live in a house with no electricity.

ERIK ARAZAS

In the kitchen, her mother is boiling water, using firewood. That is how, at times, the family heats up water for bathing—by burning wood the old-fashioned way.

Good ventilation

But the house's ventilation is so good that Gina says even the summers are not that hot.

Gina and her family came to rent the house more than 20 years ago. The rent then was P400 a month. It is now P2,400.

Gina, her 86-year-old mother Loleng, her 23-year-old son Mario and 21-year-old daughter Irene are not hermits who have shied away from modernity. Neither are they taking energy conservation to the extreme.

Their situation was forced upon them three years ago, when a relative, who once lived in the house, installed a "jumper" to keep the electric bills low because he was using an air-con.

It went on for around six months. The last bill, according to Gina, amounted to around P4,000. When they could not pay it, the Manila Electric Co. cut the service. Meralco later inspected the house, and discovered the "jumper."

Meralco charging P180,000

"I don't know how they adjusted it—I know the "jumper" went on for around six months—but we ended (up owing) Meralco around P180,000," Gina says.

Gina promptly applied for an electric line. This time, she wanted the bill under her name. She was told that she had to pay the amount, only then could the electric line be restored.

"Or it (was) like this. I'll have to pay P30,000 initially and the rest on a staggered basis, plus the monthly bill (assuming the line is restored). But it was still too heavy, we could not raise the amount," she says. She insists she knew nothing about the illegal act and therefore, feels she does not owe the electric company that much.

It has been three years since the family gave away to its eldest daughter (who now lives in Bulacan) the refrigerator, washing machine and other electrical appliances in the house.

Petromax

Now the family uses a kerosene lantern and a few small lamps at night. From afar, the home seems powered by electricity. Only upon closer scrutiny does it become apparent that a Petromax, a kerosene pressure lantern, lights up the house.

But the lantern deposits soot in the corners of the ceiling. "The ceiling has to be cleaned once in a while. It gets so black—I hate it," Gina says.

To avoid the possibility of fire, the family puts out the lamps before retiring to bed. Should they wake and need something, they use a flashlight.

The family spends around P700 a month for kerosene. They use LPG, like most residents of Metro Manila, to cook food.

They have also long solved the problem of how to have cold drinking water during meals. "We simply put ice cubes in our glasses," Gina says, chuckling.

She also goes to market every day. While she cannot store cooked food for more than a day, the lack of a refrigerator ensures that her children's meals are fresh—another benefit of an electric-less house.

Wash and wear

Their clothes have also not felt the hot press of an iron for some time. "We just hang them to dry. They're ready to wear," Gina says.

Gina says that a person's character is not defined by electricity and the convenience it provides. It may seem laughable, but Gina says her children have accepted their situation without so much as a grumble. It is her 23-year-old son, in fact, who wants to stay in Pasay.

"Mama," Gina quotes her son as telling her once when she asked him if he wanted to leave the place, "we have a house to stay in. Many others don't. Can we ask for more?"

The son works in a printing company. Expectedly, he has not acquired electronic gadgets, save a mobile phone. There are no DVD players or play stations in his room. He charges the phone's battery in his uncle's house nearby, or at his office.

Social life

The daughter's social life has not been hampered by the lack of electricity. She studies management at a college in the city.

Gina narrates how at one time, her daughter brought friends to the house. "They lighted a lamp, and they were fine," she says.

Of course, the 54-year-old mother does not hide her longing for electricity. If she can afford it—and her family clearly can pay the monthly bills—why not have it?

Gina goes to her brother's house nearby to watch TV at night.

Alternative lifestyle

She sleeps there most of the time. But her mother stays at home—she hates electric fans.

There is no doubt that this family misses many things that families with electricity usually take for granted. Imagine the convenience of simply switching the lights on and off, of turning the iron hot to press a shirt, of heating food with a microwave oven, of having a cold drink without having to wait for ice cubes.

Yet this family has been into an alternative lifestyle for years—and they have shown it can be done. If Metro Manila can emulate half of what this family goes through every day, imagine how much could be saved in terms of energy and money.

Clean water

But what the family can't do without is clean water, according to Gina. But that is another story.

"You know, it is also a choice. It is really all up to the people ... If you are contented with this (kind of life), it's fine. It's cool," she says.

'Torrid' month in QC

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE NIGHTS have been getting colder.

But this has been a hot month in Quezon City, where at least 37 fires have broken out early this year.

Based on the latest figures from the Quezon City Fire Station, 37 fires hit the city from Jan. 1 to 26.

Almost half of these were big fires, city fire investigation chief Ian Guerrero told the INQUIRER.

In the last five days alone, at least seven fires were reported in the city, including the blaze which razed more than 100 houses in Barangay Ramon Magsaysay near the SM North mall two days ago.

The latest incident was the fire which burned down a bar on Quezon Avenue the other night.

Radio officer SFO1 Jaime Viscocho said the fire, which hit Club Trebor in Barangay Sta. Cruz, started at 6:55 p.m. Wednesday.

The bar was still closed when the fire broke out. Only the cook and a security guard were inside the three-story building, SFO2 Virgilio Agpaoa said.

Firefighters put out the fire about 8 p.m. Nobody was injured.

Although Fire Prevention Month is still several weeks away, Guerrero said residents should start taking precautions. Most of the reported fires were believed to have been caused by faulty electricity wires, he added.

"We should be careful with our electric connections. Owners of old buildings should also start having their electric connections re-examined," Guerrero said.

Alabang Viaduct rehab underway

By Abigail L. Ho

EVEN while waiting for the awarding of the construction contract to the winning bidder, the Philippine National Construction Corp. has already started preliminary work on the P770-million Alabang Viaduct rehabilitation project.

PNCC chair and chief executive Pastor Ramos Jr. said the firm had already set up an operations center on the site. Right of way acquisitions had likewise started, although the contract is yet to be awarded to a bidder.

The project, which involves the upgrade of the kilometer-long Alabang Viaduct is expected to be completed within a year.

Ten construction firms have joined the bidding process.

Ramos said the PNCC bids and awards committee was still evaluating the submitted bids. A decision should be finalized within the next few weeks.

While still evaluating the bids, Ramos said preparations were already underway on how to prevent massive traffic jams once construction on the project starts.

"The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, through Chair Bayani Fernando, had said it would deploy people to ease the traffic situation in the area once construction starts," he said.

Ramos added that the viaduct would remain partially open, and the northbound lane passable. The road below the viaduct would also be open to Class 3 vehicles like big trucks.

Cars, vans and small trucks, (Class 2 and Class 3), on the other hand, can use the Filinvest Spectrum Highway.

The Alabang Viaduct rehabilitation project is only one component of the three-phase upgrade of the South Luzon Expressway.

The two other components are the 32-km Alabang-Calamba expansion and rehabilitation project and the 8.2-km Calamba-Sto. Tomas extension plan.

Like the Alabang Viaduct project, the contract for the P857-million Calamba-Sto. Tomas venture has yet to be awarded to a bidder.

"But we're nearing that stage," said Noel Eli Kintanar, chair of the Department of Trade and Industry Slex Task Force.

"Right of way acquisitions are already ongoing, in cooperation with the Toll Regulatory Board, the Department of Public Works and Highways, the PNCC and the National Development Corp.," he said.

Kintanar added that the DTI continues to be active in pushing for the three-stage Slex upgrade as this would facilitate the faster delivery of goods to the airports and seaports.

The upgrade would complement commercial activities at the Calabarzon (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon) area, he said.

Frustrated murder, theft raps filed vs PDEA agents

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has filed frustrated murder and theft charges against two members of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency who were accused of shooting a National Bureau of Investigation agent in Marikina City in 2003.

At the same time, the DOJ also dismissed similar complaints filed against Sr. Supt. Orlando Mabutas, director of the agency's Metro Manila Regional Office, for lack of sufficient evidence.

Facing charges for shooting Special Investigator Marvin Matamis and taking his personal belongings are PO3 Norman Jesus Platon and PO3 Sherwin Bulan, members of the PDEA's Special Enforcement Service.

Shot

Matamis, of the NBI's Intelligence Special Operations Division, was shot on the chest, thigh, foot and leg on Nov. 24 at the corner of Marcos Highway and Pambuli Street in Marikina City.

Bulan and Platon had approached him as he was asking for help from a traffic enforcer in settling a dispute with an FX driver, Matamis said. The two PDEA members, who were on a white Toyota Revo, allegedly thought the traffic enforcer was extorting money from Matamis, but the latter clarified the matter and introduced himself as an NBI agent.

The PDEA agents, whom witnesses said appeared to have been drinking, apparently got irked and tried to force Matamis into their vehicle, but he refused. This prompted the two PDEA members to maul him.

Later, another man whom Matamis subsequently identified from pictures as Mabutas, approached the group. The man allegedly asked the NBI agent if he knew an "Atty. Lasala," and Matamis said yes. The man then allegedly ordered the two PDEA members to arrest Matamis.

Matamis was shot as he struggled to get away from the PDEA agents. He added that the men took his badge, wallet with P15,000 in cash, his .38 firearm and other personal items.

Matamis said he was later brought to the Amang Rodriguez Hospital for treatment and later transferred to another facility. He was confined for around a month, he added.

In their defense, Platon and Bulan said they were defending themselves from the NBI agent. Bulan reportedly had an argument with Matamis over parking space in front of a fast food outlet.

Struggle

Bulan said that as he was about to approach Matamis at the parking lot, the latter pulled out a gun. The two men then grappled for the gun it subsequently went off. Bulan then pulled out his gun which also went off during a struggle with Matamis.

Platon said he was inside the fast food outlet when he heard the shots and went outside to help Bulan. It was then that he shot Matamis.

Mabutas, on the other hand, denied that he was in the area when the incident took place, adding that he does not even know Bulan and Platon.

In his resolution, DOJ prosecutor Misael Ladaga Bulan and Platon's arguments invoking self-defense were not convincing, especially since Matamis' statement has been corroborated by several witnesses.

"As a matter of fact, no injury, either slight or serious, was sustained by the respondents. In contrast, the number and nature of the wounds sustained by the complainant are indicia that respondents did not act in self-defense," the resolution read.

Ladaga also noted that two witnesses had testified that the two PDEA agents reeked of liquor at the time of the incident.

The state prosecutor said the witnesses' description of Mabutas did not match his actual appearance. Ladaga also said there was no evidence showing Mabutas had shot Matamis.

Geography, history lessons for cops

LOST in Manila or looking for a historical landmark?

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Soon, all policemen in Manila will be familiar with the city's geography and history after they go through a mandatory course on these subjects at the Western Police District Training Center, also known as the Manila Police Academy.

The academy was formally opened on Jan. 8 this year, the eve of the WPD's 104th anniversary.

Chief Insp. Alejandro Yanquiling, the center's acting dean, said that he would require all WPD policemen, including officials, to undergo at least a week of refresher courses on Manila's history and geography and the city government's programs and ordinances.

"Manila policemen should be familiar with the city's background and its streets, especially when people ask them for help," said Yanquiling, who also heads the WPD's Task Force Galugad.

He said that familiarity with the city and its ordinances would help law enforcers respond to crime or emergency incidents immediately so they can do their jobs more effectively.

The courses are also open to non-WPD members.

The training center also offers bachelor and masteral programs, in coordination with the city-owned Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

Courses on specialized skills like bomb disposal and the handling of situations like hostage-taking and bank robbery would also be offered at the center.

WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong earlier said he opened the academy so that the members of the WPD, known as "Manila's Finest," could have extra training and live up to the tag.

Leila B. Salaverria

METROBRIEFS

Taguig loan scheme

GOOD news for public servants who had been easy preys of loan sharks. Full-time public teachers and employees of the Taguig City local government can now avoid high interest loans usually offered by loan sharks through an allowance loan program. "The program was aimed at discouraging our teachers and employees from allowing themselves to be bled dry by loan sharks when faced with financial difficulties," said Mayor Freddie Tiñga. The local government and well-known bankers Peter Favila and Arsenio Bartolome III of the Taguig Rural bank entered into a memorandum of agreement recently, allowing teachers and employees of the city to avail of loans using their monthly allowances as collateral. Favila signed the agreement as chair of the rural bank, and Bartolome as founder. Favila was a former president of Allied Bank, while the latter was also the founder of Urban Bank. "They can now get in advance a year's equivalent of their monthly allowance through a loan with minimal interest," Tinga said. The teachers and employees, he said, would be asked to issue a waiver over their rights to the monthly allowance of P1,000 provided to them by the local government. They will also be asked to write a letter authorizing the local government to turn over the money to the bank as payment for their loans, Tiñga added. The resolution for the allowance-loan-program meant to help the teachers and employees was endorsed and approved by the city's Sangguniang Panglunsod in October last year. It also authorized the city executive to enter into an MOA with a financial institution for the implementation of the program.

Nancy C. Carvajal

UST HS Grand Night

MEMBERS of the University of Sto. Tomas Education High School Class of 1975 will hold their Grand Night tonight at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati as the culminating activity of their Pearl Homecoming. For further information about the affair, interested members may contact Pinky Abad at 0918-5819918 or Junjie Rayos at 0922-8101990 for assistance.

San Juan wins Round 2 in mall battle

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE TOWN of San Juan has taken over the management of the disputed Agora Mall on Monday, according to Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito.

"We are lucky that the Court of Appeals decided in our favor," Ejercito said in a press briefing on Wednesday.

"We were able to get an injunction setting aside the decision of the lower court. It means the management and control of the market and Agora Mall should be given to the municipality," the mayor added.

The town had assumed control of the mall in January 2003, but Mega Land Resources and Development Corporation had obtained a writ of preliminary injunction from a Manila court.

On Jan. 17, the Court of Appeals issued a temporary restraining order telling the Manila court not to enforce its earlier decision, town officials said.

This does not mean, however, that the legal battle is over.

Ejercito said the town had just won the "second round."

As a result of the higher court's decision, town lawyer Romualdo de los Santos directed the tenants in the area to pay their dues, amounting to around P2 million a month, to San Juan.

"All tenants should immediately stop paying rentals to Mega Land. Henceforth, rental payment to Mega Land will not be recognized," De los Santos said in his directive.

But the money will not be part of the town's annual budget, according to Ejercito.

Once the court decides with finality who would manage the mall, the town would give the money to the mall's lawful manager, the mayor said.

In the late 1990s, San Juan entered into a build-operate-transfer contract with Mega Land to construct a five-story shopping mall on Domingo Street right across the town hall.

But its construction encountered delays. To date, the structure remains unfinished.

As a result, the Sangguniang Bayan rescinded Mega Land's memorandum of agreement with the town in October 2002.

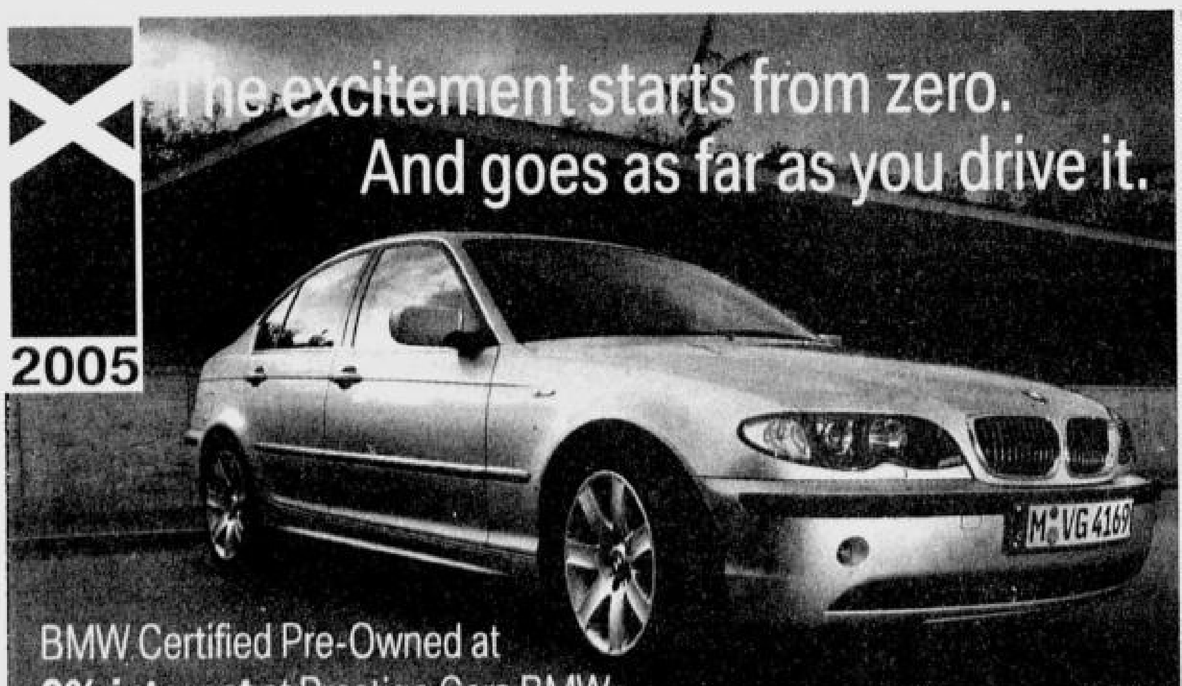
In January 2003, the tenants began paying their dues to the town for some time, according to town officials.

Mega Land, however, succeeded in asking the court to stop the town from taking over the mall's management.

This month, the Court of Appeals ruled in favor of San Juan, Ejercito said.

"There is no further legal obstacle preventing the municipality from collecting rentals from tenants of Agora Mall, and to take over the management and operation of the place," De los Santos said in his directive.

"Tenants who fail to pay their monthly rentals to the municipality will be subject to eviction procedures in accordance with law," the directive said.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No law vs cybersex, PNP laments

By Christian V. Esguerra

CYBERSEX dens have sprouted in many computer shops throughout Metro Manila, but police appear helpless in the absence of a strict law to contain the spread.

There is no law against cybersex to begin with, complained Senior Supt. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza, officer in charge of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

Republic Act No. 2928, or the Anti-Trafficking of Persons Act, is "weak," and not enough to punish operators of cybersex shops, the official added.

"The law is weak in the sense that mere possession of pornographic materials is not punishable, even if it's clear that these are used for cybersex," he said.

Cited as an example was an incident in the past when the PNP "lost" its case against Belgian Roland Thys, whose cybersex den in Barangay Malabanias, Angeles City, Pampanga was raided by police on Oct. 4.

The Department of Justice had ruled in a resolution dated Nov. 2, 2004 that mere possession of accessories used in the illegal activity was not enough to elevate the case against the Belgian in court.

Without a clear provision punishing cybersex activities, Mendoza said authorities would have to exert more effort to apprehend violators.

Still, people like Thys are more likely to escape prosecution, he added.

For instance, materials like pictures and messages found in a computer seized during a raid would have to be "reconstituted" to actually prove that someone is being used for trafficking purposes, Mendoza explained.

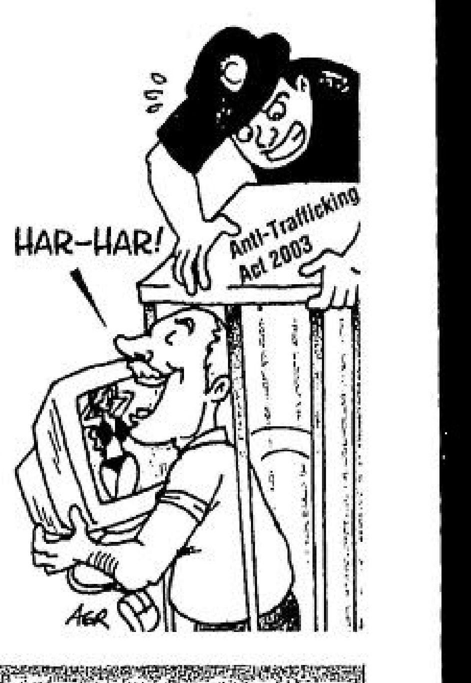
The PNP sounded the alarm with the proliferation of cybersex dens not only in Metro Manila but in other parts of the country.

Mendoza identified the cities of Angeles and San Fernando in Pampanga, Las Piñas and Davao as cybersex "hot spots."

At least two dens had been raided in Angeles late last year, the PNP official said.

Last week, police also raided a cybersex shop registered under the name Orgasmic Studios, allegedly owned by businessman Aloysius Galvez, in Las Piñas City.

On Monday, the National Telecommunications Commission ordered the temporary shutdown of all chat rooms, following complaints that some of these had been used as sex channels.



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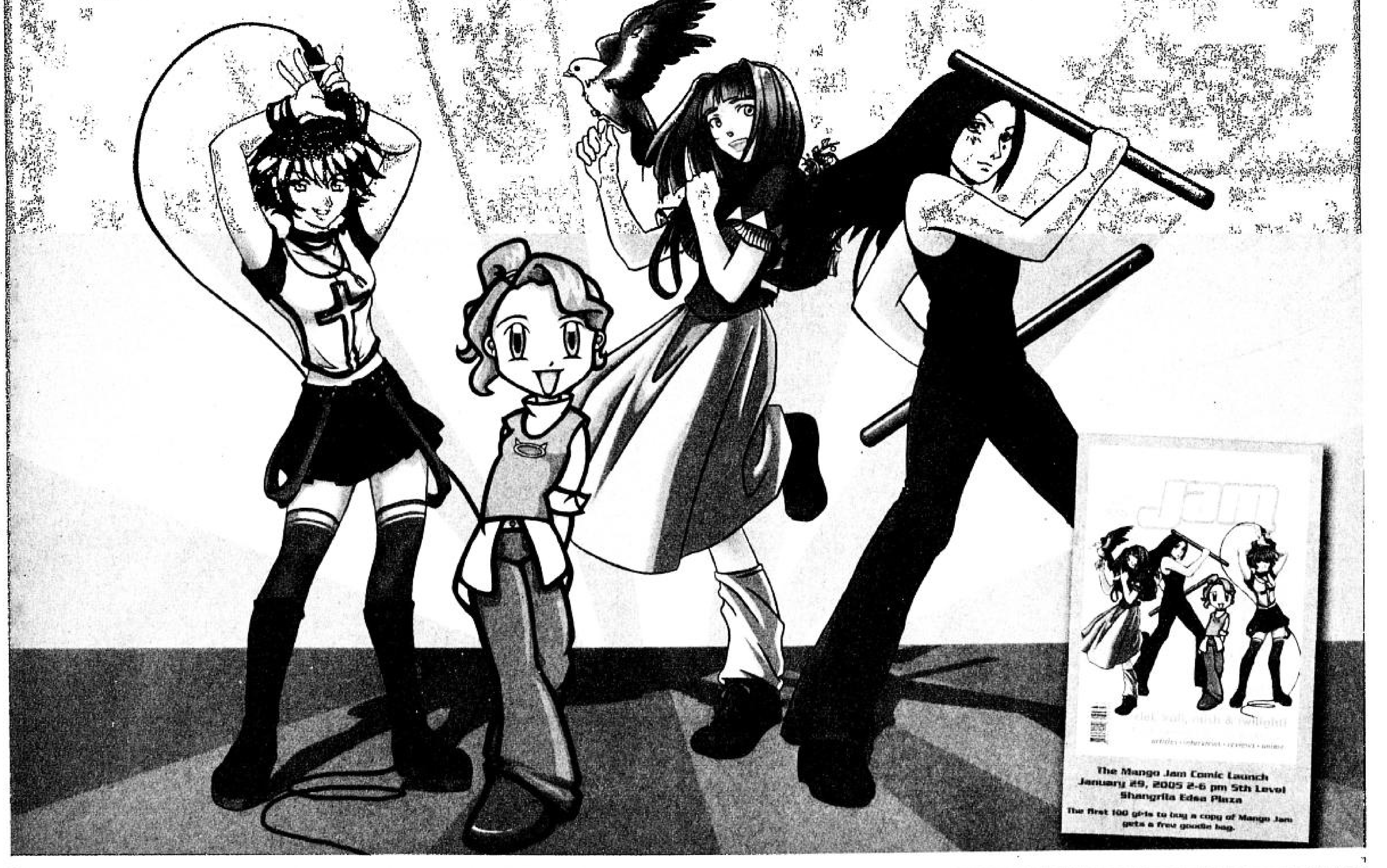

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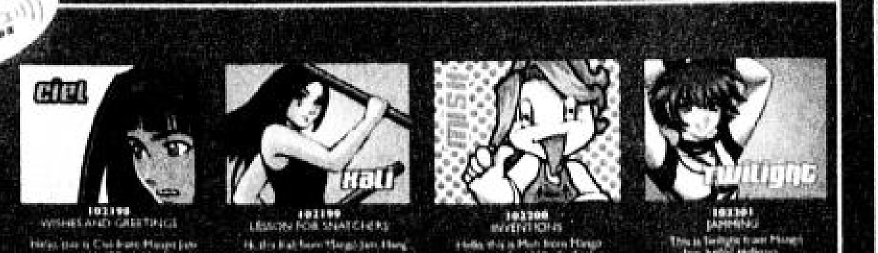

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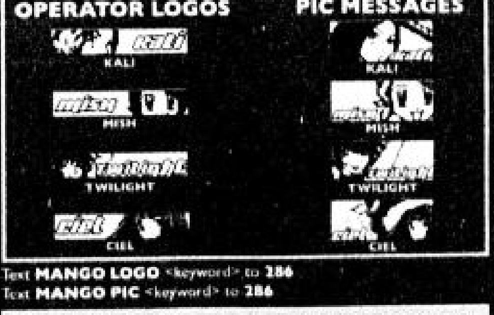

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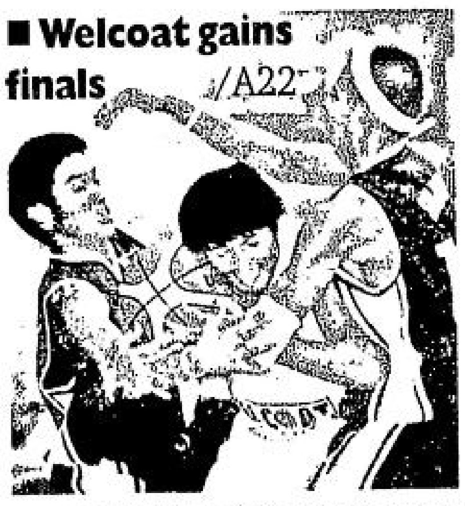
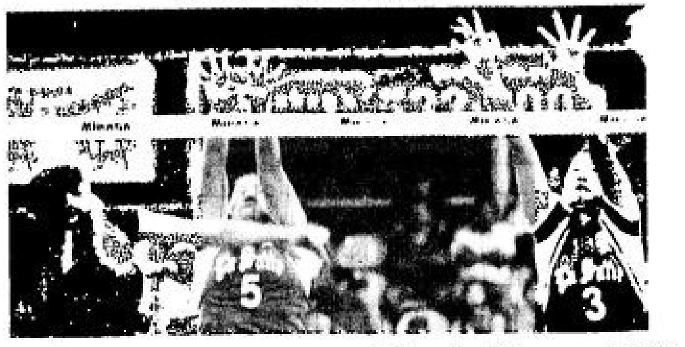


■ **Welcoat gains finals** /A22

WHAT'S INSIDE



▨ **Tigresses roar past Lady Tams** /A23

▨ **Williams survives Sharapova** /A24

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Not so fast, PBA tells Asi in wake of new court ruling /A22

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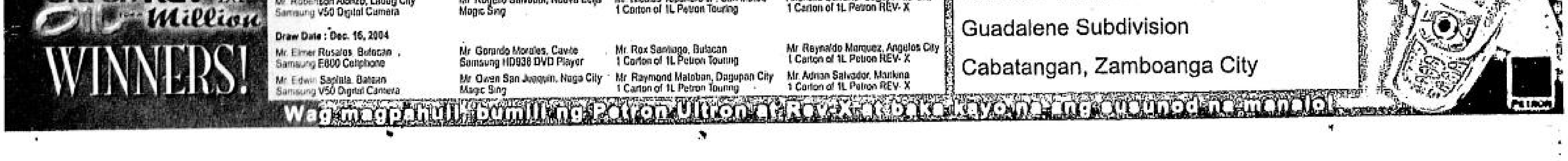
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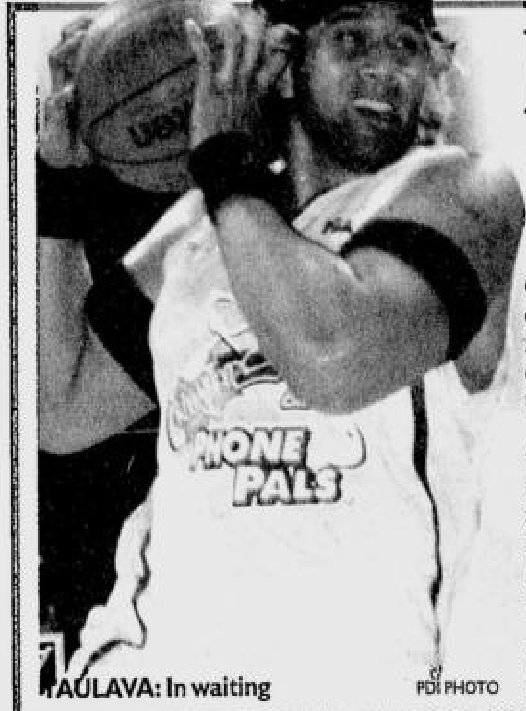
No Asi 'fastbreak,' says PBA commish


TAULAVA: In waiting PDI PHOTO

By June Navarro

NOT SO fast, Asi Taulava.

Although given the go-signal by a Quezon City Regional Trial Court yesterday to rejoin the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals in the Philippine Basketball Association, commissioner Noli Eala is in no hurry to take him back.

"We will file a motion for reconsideration tomorrow (today) and until further notice, his (Taulava) suspension stays," said Eala of the court order directing the PBA to lift Taulava's suspension that was based on a Department of Justice ruling that he faked his citizenship.

Eala has also called for an emergency meeting with the league's board of governors today to discuss the implications of the order.

"It came as a surprise," said Eala. "They (Taulava's lawyers) earlier filed a motion on two occasions and they were both denied. They didn't raise any new matter with respect to the case and the court granted Taulava a favorable decision on the third try."

Judge Rogelio Pizarro of Branch 222 of the Quezon City RTC ordered the PBA to allow Taulava to resume his exercise of his contractual rights, "including his right to play in the current All-Filipino Conference and succeeding conferences of the PBA" until further orders from the court or unless restrained by a higher court.

The new court order came more than a week after a Manila court issued an injunction stopping the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration from carrying out summary deportation proceedings against Taulava.

"We believe in the correctness of our decision [to suspend him]," said Eala, adding the latest court verdict was "replete with factual errors."

The PBA suspended Taulava and five other foreign-born players based on a DOJ ruling that they faked documents to gain Filipino citizenship. This was preceded by a Senate investigation into the players' citizenship.

Mick Pennisi, Davonn Harp and Jon Ordonio had long left the country while Rudy Hatfield and Alex Crisano are still around after filing separate TROs to extend their stay in the country.

Taulava's counsel, Eduardo E. Francisco, said the court took cognizance of their amended petition because of "supervening events" that took place between the time the court turned down the player's two earlier petitions for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the PBA's suspension order and the filing of their amended petition.

Francisco said one of the supervening events was the Jan. 6 ruling of a Manila RTC that stopped the DOJ and the BI from stripping Taulava of his citizenship."

According to Francisco, Taulava's suspension by the PBA violated his constitutional rights to due process and his contractual rights with Talk 'N Text since the suspension was anchored on a mere DOJ resolution that questioned Taulava's citizenship.

VERSUS MONTAÑA

Welcoat ousts Magnolia, makes finals

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT CAME down to two teams not many predicted would meet in the finals.

Fourth seed Welcoat Paints will battle Montaña Pawnshop in the PBL Open championship series after posting a hard-fought 67-61 win yesterday over Magnolia-FEU in the finale of their semifinal duel yesterday at the Makati Coliseum

Anthony Washington played with his usual high energy to finish with 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Paintmasters, who also got an unexpected boost from Ryan Dy and JA Coching.

"Our second unit stepped up in this game," said coach Caloy Garcia after his Paintmasters frustrated the Wizards' bid for a second straight title.

"I think this is the first time it happened that we had a balanced scoring."

"The players just wanted to win more," added Garcia, whose Paintmasters are in the finals for the 10th time since 1996. "This proved that we can win it in the finals."

It was a disappointing finish for the top-seeded Wizards, whose campaign was highlighted by an amazing 10-game winning streak.

After trailing 29-32 at halftime, the Paintmasters leaned on the scoring of Coching and Marvin Ortiguerra to wrest the lead, 42-38, late in the third quarter.

Washington and Dy then nailed back-to-back triples that gave Welcoat its first double-digit advantage, 48-38.

The Paintmasters, who trailed 3-15 at the start, waxed hot at the perimeter while the Wizards lost their offensive spark in the second half.

The Wizards were held to six points in the third period, shooting only one of 16 attempts. The rest of their four points came on freethrows.

Poor freethrow shooting compounded the Wizards' woes in the final quarter, where they made only six of their 14 gift shots.

Magnolia-FEU managed to pull within six points, 50-44, at the 6:12 mark, but Coching and Dy repelled the Wizards' comeback.

"We started slow but I told them not to panic," said Garcia. "We took it a quarter at a time. I told them to work hard on defense and the offense will come."

Jay-R Reyes sparked the Paintmasters' run in the second quarter that narrowed the gap, 24-26. A Washington basket tied the contest, 26-26.

GAMES TUESDAY
(*Makati Coliseum*)
2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs Magnolia-FEU (knockout for 3rd place)
4 p.m.—Welcoat vs Montaña (Game 1 of best-of-five finals)

CHESTER Tolomia of Welcoat tries to wiggle out of a double team by Warren Ybañez and Arwind Santos of Magnolia during their game yesterday. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

The scores:

WELCOAT 67—Washington 16, Dy 13, Coching 9, Ortiguerra 8, Tolomia 6, Reyes 6, Tan 5, Sta. Maria 4, Najorda 0, Gamboa 0

MAGNOLIA-FEU 61—Santos 18, Catli 12, Rañeses 8, Ybañez 6, Miranda 4, Jones 4, Misolas 3, Rizada 2, Chan 2, Isip 2

Quarters: 10-18, 29-32, 48-38, 67-61.

Do-or-die tiff today for Kings, Beermen

SAN MIGUEL Beer and Barangay Ginebra believe that desire and proper execution of plays will determine the outcome of their tough and exciting semifinal series.

And both teams agree there will be little or no adjustments to be made when they decide in a rubber match today at the Araneta Coliseum who will get to the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup finals against the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals.

The Kings blew a 16-point lead but leaned on Marc Caguioa's jumper in the last three seconds to secure a 94-92 victory Wednesday that pushed the best-of-five semifinal series affair to the limit.

"We'll definitely go for the marbles," said Eric Menk, following an explosive 24-point, 11-rebound output that helped the Kings tie the series at 2-2.

"It's going to be as tough and as intense as in the first four games," added Menk, referring to Game 5, which will be aired by ABC-5 starting at 7:10 tonight.

Caguioa is also anticipating a fierce showdown.

"It will boil down to who can execute better," said Caguioa. "Either they play their style better or we make them play our game."

True enough, the first four games of the semifinals went to the team which refused to bog down under pressure and managed to run its plays.

In Game 1, the Beermen battled through six deadlocks and 11 lead changes before mounting an 18-4 run in the final period and staving off Ginebra's late charge.

Game 2 saw the Kings bolt out from a deadlock at 71 to post a commanding 83-74 spread they never relinquished until the end.

The Beermen won Game 3 by holding the Kings scoreless for almost six minutes during the latter half of the fourth quarter.

Coach Jong Uichico and the Beermen, however, failed to follow their final defensive game plan in Game 4 and the Kings pulled off the squeaker.

"Had we followed our defensive game plan, it would not have come down to that last shot (Caguioa's game-winner)," said Uichico.

Uichico is hoping there won't be another breakdown in their defensive strategy this time.

"It's going to be real close. There will be no blowouts because both teams will do everything to win this game," he said.

Coach Siot Tanquingcen said he has great respect for his former mentor (Uichico) but added he's confident his Kings will deliver. *June Navarro*

GAME TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
(Game 5 best-of-five semifinals)
7:10 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Barangay Ginebra

Previous results:
Game 1—SMB d. Ginebra, 96-87
Game 2—Ginebra d. SMB, 100-92
Game 3—SMB d. Ginebra, 96-91
Game 4—Ginebra d. SMB, 94-92

Uichico to refs: Don't take sides in Game 5

PLAYING against Barangay Ginebra and its boisterous crowd automatically throws opposing teams at a disadvantage. What more if the referees come into play?

Thus coach Jong Uichico is asking the referees not to take sides when his San Miguel Beermen clash with the Barangay Ginebra Kings in the rubber match of their PBA series today.

"It's not nice to blame the refs because we lost the game," said Uichico following a 94-92 setback against the Kings Wednesday. "All we're asking for is to be given a fair shake of the officiating. They should call it both ways."

Game 4 statistics showed the Gin Kings taking 25 trips to the freethrow line as against the Beermen's 16. Uichico said there were two non-calls that hurt his team in the endgame.

"Whenever you play Ginebra, you always come as an underdog," he said. "It's like playing five against six because of the crowd.

"Now, if the referees will give 25 foul shots to Ginebra and award just 16 freethrows to us, then we will not only be playing against six."

The Beermen were also assessed with more fouls—27-21—with their starters getting slapped a total of 18 contacts as against the 13 called on the first five of the Kings.

Eric Menk, who played with almost no relief while battling the Beermen's frontline, fetched a lone foul in 42 minutes of action. Romel Adducul and Andy Seigle, however, finished the game with four fouls each.

Nic Belasco and Dondon Hontiveros had five fouls apiece and Dale Singson four, while Danny Seigle, Dorian Peña, Olsen Racela and Danny Ildefonso had three each. *June Navarro*

UICHICO: 5 versus 6

Classic

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WHAT is classic?

It is timeless. Everything in a thing called classic is great. Immortal. Beyond death, obscurity or oblivion.

The art of Van Gogh is classic. The music of Mozart is classic. The game of Michael Jordan is classic.

Lleyton Hewitt and David Nalbandian have just created another classic in sports. Their quarterfinal match in the Australian Open on Wednesday was the stuff that makes sporting contests classic.

Woe to those who failed to watch it on STAR Sports, the cable TV that, thank God, exclusively airs live the Australian Open everyday.

It was one of the most extraordinary tennis matches I've seen in a long, long while.

Almost, it brought back memories of Connors-Borg, Laver-Newcombe, even Sampras-Agassi when Agassi was still the Agassi of old.

At 34, Agassi has shown signs of over-the-hill stuff. His straight-set, quarterfinal loss to Roger Federer on Tuesday should make him rethink about his priorities, if not his career. Agassi, the winner of eight Grand Slam titles, has said after the debacle: "I would suggest that his (Federer) next opponents don't look to me for advice."

And this was coming from the same man who won the Australian Open four times.

But while the Federer-Agassi match was as one-sided as a lion-versus-man fight in the Coliseum of Rome, the Hewitt-Nalbandian encounter was a classic in thrill, excitement and suspense. No one from the packed crowd at Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne had any inkling which of the two would win.

It was so close it could be likened to the last US presidential election, when neither Bush nor Kerry had the clear edge just hours before America went to vote in November 2004.

In one fleeting moment after one fleeting moment, you'll see Nalbandian seemingly all set to wrap up the match.

But Hewitt, like a damsel bent on turning away a spurned suitor, will always deny him.

Down two sets, the tall, well-built Argentinian rallied mightily to even up matters at two sets apiece.

But if that was the package that makes legends out of ordinary mortals, it was the fifth set that produces the ingredients to transform men into myths.

Never mind that the match lasted four hours and five minutes. Final score, Hewitt winning: 6-3, 6-2, 1-6, 3-6, 10-8. The fifth and last set alone was a killer: 1 hour, 41 minutes.

Nobody stays that long in a battle and comes out of it sane, let alone in one whole piece.

"I just kept hanging in there," said Hewitt. "I had opportunities to break. In the end, it paid off once again."

If he had said, "I almost died out there," nobody would have doubted him.

A lot of times, the ninth-seeded Nalbandian appeared out to upset the third-seeded Hewitt.

But almost always, in a snap, Hewitt would come back, like a pickpocket dashing from nowhere, snatching crucial points from improbable situations that eternally drew cheers.

But if the pro-Hewitt crowd loved every minute of it—Hewitt being an Australian—the non-Aussies who had the fortune of watching the match adored every second of it.

In this classic, everybody was partisan only to no one but the match.

It was a battle that had no winner. Only a survivor.

Hewitt, aiming to become the first Aussie to win the crown in 25 years in the Australian Open's centennial, survived it by a thread—no matter that he won the victory-clinching game at love as Nalbandian finally fell prey to the combined pressure from the crowd and the "Aussie Battler" that was Hewitt.

Hewitt's semifinal opponent today beginning at 4:30 p.m. is Andy Roddick, "The Rocket" from America. Roddick is No. 2 but history is on Hewitt's side, having beaten the American twice in their last two encounters.

Will this match be another classic?

I can't wait to watch it—again at STAR Sports, the trusty carrier of classics.

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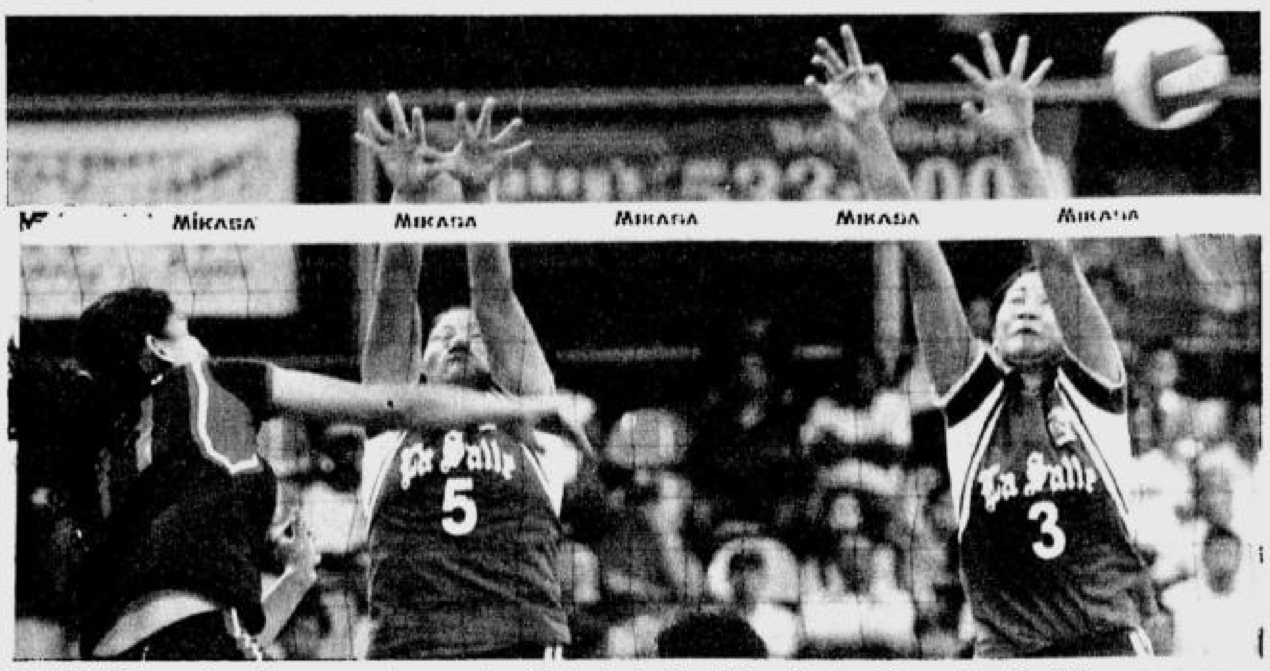

LETRAN'S Cherry Rose Macatangay slams one in off Reiea Ferina Saet (5) and Desiree Hernandez of La Salle. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Tigresses roar past Lady Tams

By Musong R. Castillo

SANTO Tomas rode Roxanne Pimentel's brilliance in the clutch yesterday to nip also-ran Far Eastern, 16-25, 25-15, 17-25, 25-14, 16-14, and earn at least a tie for the top ranking in the Shakey's V-League semifinals.

The 6-foot athletic marvel was her old reliable self, stepping up in the absence of attacker Kate Co Yu Kang as the defending champion Tigresses wrapped up their elimination stint with an 11-1 tally.

UST can earn top seeding outright if La Salle loses against PSC on Sunday. The Lady Archers, meanwhile, improved to 10-1 after a 25-23, 21-25, 25-17, 27-25 conquest of Letran in the second game at the Rizal Coliseum.

GAMES SUNDAY (*Rizal Coliseum*)
1 p.m.—Lyceum vs. Letran
3 p.m.—La Salle vs. PSC

Far Eastern ended its campaign with only two wins to show in 12 games.

In the event the Lady Archers win over the Lady Legends, Santo Tomas will be relegated to second spot by virtue of an inferior quotient and will play the No. 3 seed in the Final Four.

The final rankings will be known after the regular double-header that will close the elimination round on Sunday.

The high-leaping Co Yu Kang complained of sore knees and was not utilized in the one-hour and 51-minute match.

But Pimentel stepped up her game, mocking the FEU defense with a game-high 22 points, 20 coming from kills.

"It could be a case of over-fatigue," said Santo Tomas coach August Sta. Maria of Co Yu Kang. "She was willing to play but I chose not to field her."

Venus Bernal, a reed thin hard-worker, chipped in 16 points even as Mary Jean Balse and Rubie de Leon combined for another 23 to complete the four-sided battering ram for Sta. Maria.

The Tigresses trailed, 11-12, in the final set before Balse and Bernal accounted for three of the team's last five points.

Baguio training for SEAG track bets from schools

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MEMBERS of the national track and field team from the UAAP and NCAA schools have been given permission to train in Baguio along with the rest of the athletics team competing in this year's Southeast Asian Games.

Athletics president Go Teng Kok yesterday met with representatives of the country's top colleges and universities who supported the move to send the athletes to high-altitude training in Baguio for the SEAG scheduled Nov. 27-Dec. 5 in Metro Manila and three other provincial venues.

The athletes will be quartered at the Teachers' Camp to prepare them for different international competitions before the SEAG.

The Philippines is hoping to win 12 to 15 gold medals this year after bringing home nine and eight golds—the most among all the national sports associations—during the 2001 and 2003 SEAG, respectively.

"I understand that some of my athletes are scholars of these two leagues, and while my athletes are committed to the flag, they also have their studies to think of," said Go.

As in previous arrangements, the student-athletes will be cross-enrolled in Baguio schools.

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Lhuillier-Cebu five outclasses Nationals

STANDINGS	W	L
M. Lhuillier-Cebu City	4	0
RP Training team	3	1
North Cotabato Braves	2	2
Quezon Coco Huskers	2	2
Konkuk University-Korea	1	3
Fujian-China	0	4

CEBU CITY—URBL champion M. Lhuillier-Cebu City Jewelers caught fire in the final eight minutes and crushed RP-Cebuana Lhuillier, 106-76, yesterday to reach the finals of the Mayor Tomas Osmeña Sinulog Invitational Cup at the New Cebu Coliseum here.

Import John Grice topscored anew with 30 points as he joined Bruce Dacia in the deciding 38-7 blitz that took the fight out of the Nationals.

The Jewelers remained spotless in four games while the Nationals, at 3-1, will have to work harder to secure the other finals berth against the resurging North Cotabato Braves and Quezon Coco Huskers.

Bob Ilanga scored 17 points as the North Cotabato Braves made mincemeat of the still winless Fujian Province Selection of China, 90-63, while the Huskers, led by Jef Flowers and Buboy Rodriguez, blasted Konkuk University of South Korea, 99-72.

Both the Braves and the Huskers have 2-2 cards.

The Jewelers and the Nationals waged a tight, exciting battle for three quarters until that 38-7 salvo that broke the game wide open.

Tanauan batters seal title clash with Nueva Ecija

TALAVERA, Nueva Ecija—Tanauan City drove in five runs in the seventh inning to score a come-from-behind 13-11 win over Makati yesterday in the semifinals of the All High School National Baseball championships at the Talavera National High School ground here.

The win sent the boys of Tanauan Mayor Alfredo Coloma in today's finals against defending champion Nueva Ecija, which crushed Isabela, 11-0, in the other semifinal match.

The Batangueños trailed by seven runs in the first two innings but managed to tie the score at 8-all after the sixth.

A hit, a sacrifice, three walks and a Makati error enabled Tanauan to score five runs in the upper seventh and take the lead for good.

Makati tried to rally in the bottom half of the inning, but Jonathan Mueco, who relieved starter Banjo Lucido, gave up only three runs.

"My pitchers did their job and their teammates really helped them in offense. That is the reason for our victory," said Tanauan coach Chito Mercado.

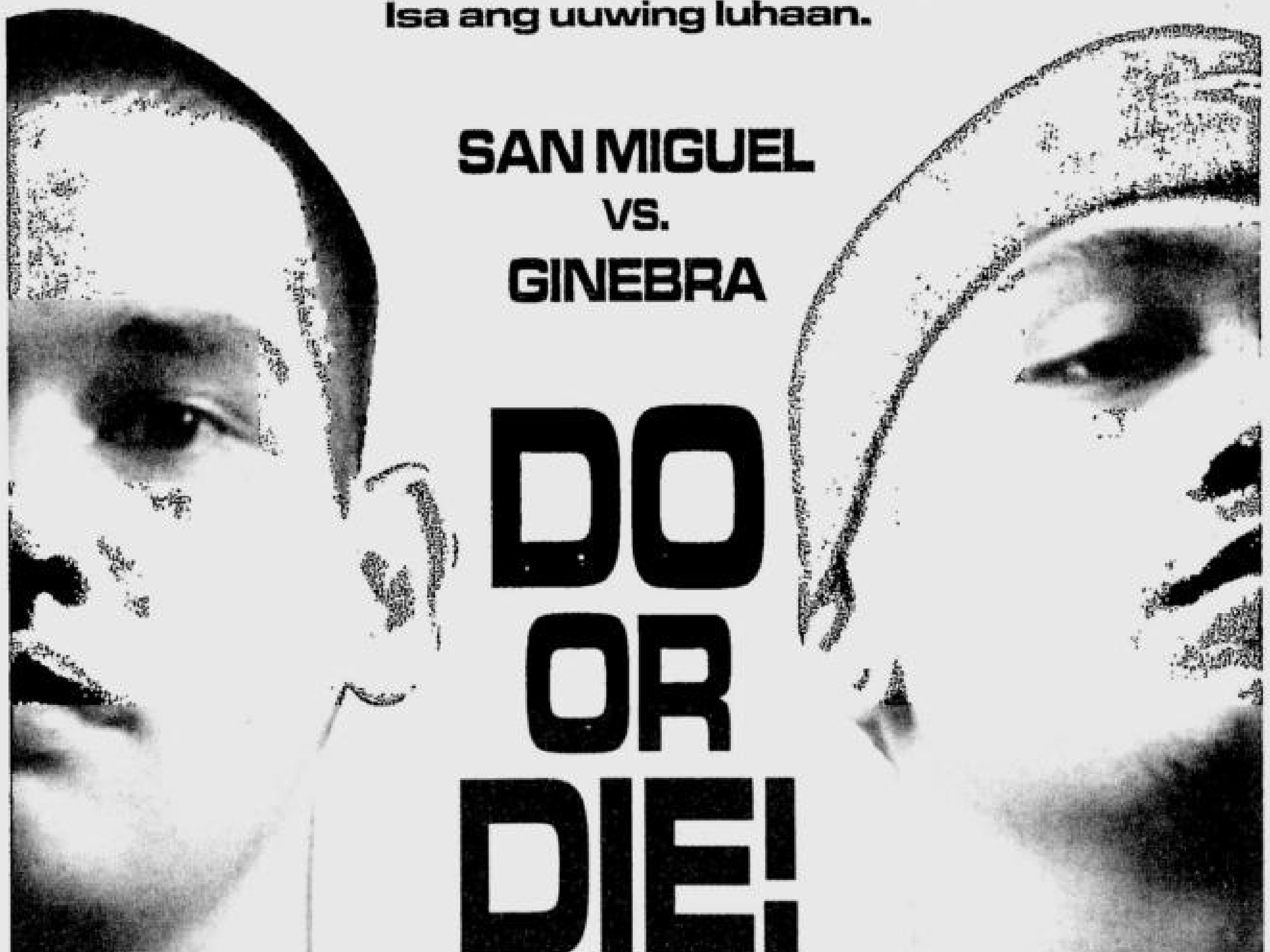
He added he's confident against Nueva Ecija with John Joseph taking the mound for Tanauan in the 1 p.m. winner-take-all game.

Makati will face Isabela for third place earlier at 9 a.m.

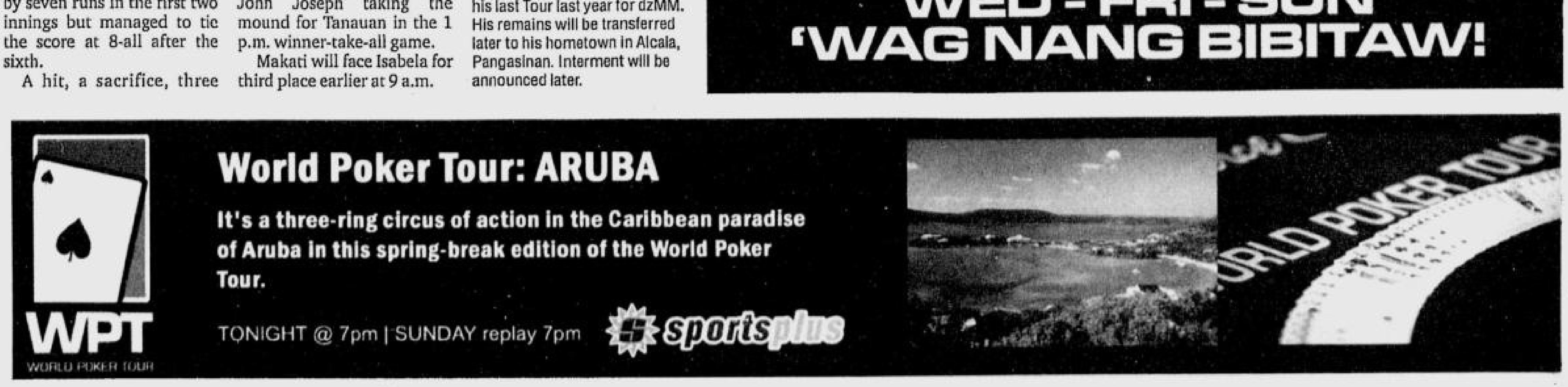
Sapelino, 'voice' of bikathon, dies

EARL "The Pearl" Sapelino, the voice of the annual summer cycling Tour, passed away yesterday after suffering a stroke. He was 61. The veteran radio sports commentator, whose gritty, blow-by-blow coverage of the Tour is legendary, was rushed to the Chinese General Hospital last Monday. He never regained consciousness and died at 7:30 a.m. Thursday. His remains will be brought to the Funenaria Paz along Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. He started covering the annual race on wheels in the early '70s with the Mabuhay Broadcasting Corporation, providing drama to the race through his incisive radio coverage. He is survived by wife Ofelia, sons Hefner, Ceferino, Earl Jr., and daughter Claire, who rushed him to the hospital from their home in Sta. Maria, Bulacan. Before his death, he was the station manager of dzRB Tuguegarao. He covered his last Tour last year for dzMM. His remains will be transferred later to his hometown in Alcala, Pangasinan. Interment will be announced later.

Parehong dalawang beses nanalo.
Parehong dalawang beses natalo.
Mamaya magkakasubukan.
Isa ang uuwing luhaan.



SAN MIGUEL
VS.
GINEBRA
DO OR DIE!
SINO ANG HARI NG MGA ASTIG?
PBA
ABC
WED - FRI - SUN
'WAG NANG BIBITAW!



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It's a three-ring circus of action in the Caribbean paradise of Aruba in this spring-break edition of the World Poker Tour.
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SPORTSWATCH

NCFP starts selection process

THE SELECTION process for the country's representatives to the 2005 Southeast Asian (SEA) Games to be hosted by the Philippines this November begins with the staging of the 2005 National Chess Championship. National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Go Teng Kok said qualification tournaments among untitled chess players will be conducted nationwide. The kick-off leg commences with the Region I elimination at the Marcos Stadium in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte, on Feb. 18 to 20. The event is to be hosted by the provincial government of Ilocos Norte represented by provincial board member and head of Sports Development Council Michael Keon, in cooperation with the Northern Ilocos Chess Enthusiasts chess club head by lawyer Gemmo Guillermo. For details, contact Benigno Mariano Jr. at 0920-2166027 or Marju Miguel (0920-7314055). ***NM Marlon Bernardino***

MCC holds Dalawahan chess

THE TANDEMS of National Master Roland Perez-Julius Caesar Marquez of Pulilan, Bulacan, and Emerson Barion-Judith Pineda of Olongapo City lead the early entries in the first edition of the 2005 MCC 60-minute Dalawahan chess tournament which kicks off at noon tomorrow at the club's headquarters at the 4F of J & F Divino Bldg. near LRT 2 Anonas Station in Quezon City. Each entry consists of two players and can field a master provided their average standard rating is not over 2000. A total pot of P15,000 with the champion getting the top prize of P5,000 is at stake. Participants must register at the venue at least before the tournament starts or call 435-8412 and 0916-852-1069. Other early bets are Datu brothers Jesus Alfonso and Niño, Noche brothers, Whiz and Might and father-son Claro-Christian Flores.

Sports Plus airs world poker

SPORTS Plus will air the third leg of the World Poker Tour from the Caribbean paradise of Aruba at 7 tonight. As an aperitif, four online amateurs will square off to see how their computer skills translate into live poker before four professionals face each other in a winner-take-all for the $250,000 pot. The survivors in the amateur and professional categories will then clash head-on as they try to secure a guaranteed seat in the cash-rich World Poker Tour Championship. Sports Plus is available on Sky Cable (channel 45), Home cable (channel 21) and Destiny (channel 42) Now on its third week, the World Poker Tour is a 13-leg tournament played in Casinos all over the world featuring the best poker players in the planet vying for multimillion-dollar cash prizes.

AGE holds special open house

VISITORS to Ayala Greenfield Estates (AGE) this Sunday will have the chance to learn the rudiments as well as the finer aspects of golf from a professional instructor at the facility's driving range. On the same day, the sprawling golf and leisure community nestled on the foothills of Mt. Makiling will launch available slots in Phase 2 during a special open house. The new lots are located near the Arbor Trails area of the site which offers excellent views of Laguna de Bay. For a minimal activation fee, every lot buyer is entitled to a free share and membership at the Ayala Greenfield Estates Golf and Leisure Club. From April to June, lot owners can activate their Golf and Leisure Club membership for P50,000. Ayala Greenfield Estates is located in Calamba, Laguna, and is a joint venture between Ayala Land Inc. and Greenfield Development Corp. For inquiries, call 848-5000 or log on to www.ayalaland.com.ph, or e-mail ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph.

PCC hosts 4-cock derby

PROMINENT cockers and breeders collide anew in another exciting 4-cock derby today at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten as sponsors. Hosts Lito Alcantara, Boy 2 and Emitt San Juan have invited PCCA members like Jake Macasaet, Jun Marasigan, William Go, Benjie Lim, Lito Orillaza, former Sen. Ramon Revilla, Rudy Salud, William Co, Mon Torres, Joel Fernando, Ramon Mancenares, Terence Madlambayan, Joey Lapid and Jack Chung, among others. At stake today is a cash prize of P300,000 with an entry fee of P10,000. Meanwhile, another edition of Fastest Kill Challenge One-Cock Ulutan fires off on Sunday, Jan. 30 dangling a guaranteed prize of P100,000 for an entry fee of only P500. Minimum bet is only P1,100. The champion will get P40,000; second, P20,000; third, P10,000; fourth, P5,000; fifth, P4,000; sixth to 11th, P2,000. For inquiries, contact 8431890, 8431746 and 8166750.

Roligon anniversary tomorrow

THE MUCH-AWAITED P4-million Roligon 15th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby kicks off tomorrow with a record field of 255 entries confirmed to see action. Hosted by Rolly Ligon and sponsored by Thunderbird Power Feeds, the six-day event stakes a guaranteed cash prize of P4 million and a 3-door 2800 Pajero for an entry fee of P12,000 and a minimum bet of P5,500. Submission of weights for those set to fight in tomorrow's opener is set today from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Weight limits are from 1.8- 2.4 kg. Ready to contend tomorrow are WSC victors Boy Marzo, Rey Briones & William Go, "Apordabol" derby champs Rep. Ronnie Puno and Biboy Enriquez; Noli Cacho, Rey Que, engineer Noel Zoleta, Peter Panadero, Alex Badajos and Camanci Norte.

BASKETBALL WITH BLACK: Champion PBA coach Norman Black gives instructions to players of the RP-Burlington Youth team and the UST Tigers during the taping of the Burlington Basketball 101 with Norman Black at the University of Santo Tomas gym recently. The instructional program is aired on ABC-5 every Wednesday and Friday, right before the telecast of the PBA Games.

FASTEST GUN: SPO4 Christopher Panes (right) receives a certificate of ownership for a Smith & Wesson special handgun from Sigcomm-Wagenhaus president Jaime Ma. Flores for bagging the overall championship in the Tom Osmeña PNP Cup in Lapu-Lapu City recently. The five-day competition among 426 police shooters from the country's 13 regions was officiated by the Cebu Pistol and Rifle Association and backed by Flores' Smith & Wesson RP distributorship.

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Bari Bari 2. No Compromise 3. Sweet Inspiration 4. Jungle King
Race 2--1. Skip Away/En Carta 2. Golden Treasure 3. Astimegoesby/Express Strike 4. Delly
Race 3--1. Super Wind 2. King Foppy 3. Speed King 4. Risk Taker
Race 4--1. Concorde/Nothing to Declare 2. Batangas Force 3. Hazmagic 4. Albatross 5. Dato's Pride
Race 5--1. Casanova 2. Formidable Ella 3. Burst of Speed
Race 6--1. Rindo Maker 2. Golden Brook 3. Ocean Wings 4. Player's Twist 5. Voice of Destiny
Race 7--1. Cat's Jewel 2. Striker 3. Doña Gelay
Race 8--1. Lady Be Gold 2. Mandalay Bay 3. Breakaway 4. Cable Car
Race 9--1. Coolmore 2. Snow Princess 3. Patago 4. Super Shuttle 5. Music Quest 6. Streisand

Cavaliers tame Grizzlies; Heat torch Raptors

CLEVELAND—LeBron James scored 27 points with a career-high 15 assists and nine rebounds, finishing in pain on a sprained left ankle to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 114-111 victory Wednesday night over the short-handed Memphis Grizzlies.

JAMES

It looked as though James' night was over when he twisted his ankle with 9:23 left and the Cavaliers up by 10. But after being helped off the floor, James dramatically returned with 4:53 remaining and helped close out Memphis.

"I had to lead my team," James said. "My 80 percent can help us win. I can't be scared. I've got to be a soldier out there."

Drew Gooden scored 27 points—six during the 4 1/2 minutes when James went out—and Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 22 for the Cavaliers, who improved to an Eastern Conference-best 15-4 at home.

The Grizzlies, playing without center Pau Gasol and forward James Posey, were led by Mike Miller's season-high 28 points.

"We came in here kind of short-handed, and they were, too, so it's not an excuse," Miller said.

In Washington, Gilbert Arenas scored 33 points, overcoming a career night from Allen Iverson's replacement as Wizards beat Philadelphia for its fourth straight win.

Juan Dixon scored 14 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter as the Wizards closed the game with a 20-9 run to win their eighth straight at home and 11th of 13 since New Year's Day. The last four victories have come without Larry Hughes, who has a broken thumb, but Arenas, Dixon and Antawn Jamison (23 points) have more than compensated for the missing points and defense.

The 76ers played without Iverson, the NBA's scoring leader, but Willie Green proved a more than able substitute, scoring a career-high 32 points and keeping the game close for 3 1/2 quarters. The game had 11 ties and 16 lead changes until Arenas, Dixon and Jamison spurred the Wizards' late run.

In Boston, Paul Pierce scored 23 points and Raef LaFrentz had 12 points with 11 rebounds to help Boston down Indiana and spoil Stephen Jackson's return from a 30-game brawl suspension.

Jackson scored 17 points in 38 minutes in his first game back since the Nov. 19 melee against Detroit, when Ron Artest went into the stands seeking a fan who threw a cup at him. Jackson followed Artest into the crowd and took several swings at fans.

Jermaine O'Neal scored 25 for the Pacers.

Gary Payton had 10 points with nine assists and Ricky Davis scored 18 as a reserve for Boston, which won its fourth consecutive home game a night after snapping a nine-game road losing streak.

In Toronto, Shaquille O'Neal had 33 points and 18 rebounds, and Eddie Jones added 23 points as Miami beat Toronto.

Jones went 8-for-11 from the field for the Heat, who have won just six of their last 12 games. O'Neal suggested Jones needed to make more shots after Jones went 3-for-12 from the field in Monday's loss to Philadelphia.

Dwyane Wade had 16 points and 10 assists despite playing with a sore left knee and ankle.

Former Heat point guard Rafer Alston had a career-high 29 points and Chris Bosh added a career-high 27 for the Raptors, who had won their previous five home games.

COMPLETE RESULTS: Boston 100, Indiana 86; Cleveland 114, Memphis 111; Washington 117, Philadelphia 107; Miami 111, Toronto 96; Detroit 87, Denver 70; Houston 82, New Orleans 77; Phoenix 121, Milwaukee 115; Minnesota 104, Atlanta 87; Utah 109, Seattle 100; Dallas 95, Portland 88; New Jersey 113, Golden State 99; LA Clippers 105, LA lakers 89. *AP*

Iverson to have MRI on hurting shoulder

PHILADELPHIA—Philadelphia 76ers star guard Allen Iverson missed practice on Tuesday to have an MRI on his ailing left shoulder.

Iverson's shoulder has been bothering him for much of the season, but, so far, he has been able to play through the pain.

Still, there has been no indication that the former Georgetown standout will miss Wednesday's game against the Washington Wizards. Iverson was listed as questionable for Monday's game against the Miami Heat and posted 45 points and 11 assists in the Sixers' victory.

The 29-year-old Iverson leads the NBA with 29.1 points per game. He is also fourth in the league in steals (2.24 spg) and fifth in assists (7.5 apg). *Reuters*

IVERSON: Eager spectator

SERENA Williams (right) exults after completing a hard-fought victory over Sharapova in the women's singles semifinals of the Australian Open on Rod Laver Arena at Melbourne Park, Australia. The seventh-seeded Williams exacted revenge over Sharapova, the fourth seed, who beat her for last year's Wimbledon title. AP

Williams su
Sharapova,
Davenport

MELBOURNE, Australia—Serena Williams finally beat Maria Sharapova in a big match, saving three match points and defeating the Wimbledon champion, 2-6, 7-5, 8-6, Thursday in the Australian Open semifinals.

The seventh-seeded Williams, seeking her seventh Grand Slam title, will face top-ranked Lindsay Davenport in an all-American final Saturday. Davenport rallied to beat 19th-seeded Nathalie Dechy of France, 2-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4, in the second semifinal.

"I have to stay focused," said Williams, the 2003 Australian Open winner who skipped the tournament last year because of a knee injury. "I'm back in a final. It's been such a tough 12 months for me."

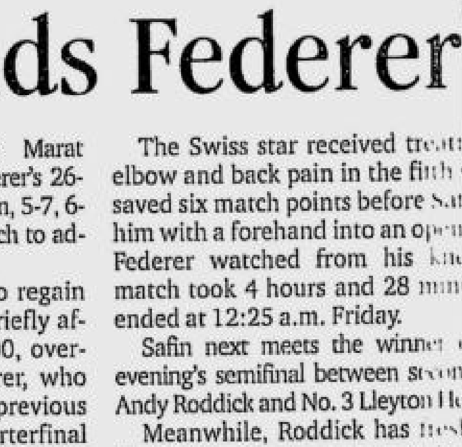
The 17-year-old Sharapova, an upset winner over Williams last year in the Wimbledon final and season-ending WTA championship, served for the match at 5-4 in the second set and again at 5-4 in the third.

"I played from my heart. I didn't take my chances. That's what this game is all about," Sharapova said. "The match could have gone either way. She
chances when she had to and t
difference. That's why she won."

The third set lasted 66 minu
the crowd in the packed Rod Lav
cheered and groaned on ever
seemingly not wanting the drama

"I think it definitely lived up to
tions," Williams said. "It was a lot
I can't believe it's over, I feel like
still be playing."

After twice trading breaks earl
set and saving mat
with a string of bl
forehands, Williams
three break points before h



DAVENPORT: Ready for Williams. AP

Safin ends Federer

MELBOURNE, Australia—Russia's Marat Safin ended top-ranked Roger Federer's 26-match winning streak, outlasting him, 5-7, 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (6), 9-7, in a classic match to advance to the Australian Open final.

Fourth-seeded Safin, aiming to regain the No. 1 ranking that he held briefly after winning the US Open in 2000, overcame an unusually jittery Federer, who hadn't dropped a set in five previous matches here, including a quarterfinal domination of Andre Agassi.

The Swiss star received tre
elbow and back pain in the fi
saved six match points before S
him with a forehand into an op
Federer watched from his k
match took 4 hours and 28 min
ended at 12:25 a.m. Friday.

Safin next meets the winne
evening's semifinal between se
Andy Roddick and No. 3 Lleyton H

Meanwhile, Roddick has
his side as he attempts to re

Future Pacquiaos need enterprising pro

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

PRO boxing in the Philippines needs a shot in the arm to produce more boxers in the mold of a Manny Pacquiao. The sport is on the decline.

Gone are the good old days when many Filipino fighters earned international fame and appreciation because of their prowess in the ring.

One reason why pro boxing has declined is the dearth of great champions. It is also because the business of boxing promotions is no longer profitable. Still, former boxing manager and promoter Northern Samar Gov. Raul Daza said people should not lose heart and throw in the towel. "There is a vital need to stage more boxing promotions in the Philippines, if for no other reason than to develop a virile Filipino race," he stressed.

In 1996 when I headed the Philippine Sportswriters Association, Speaker Jose De Venecia and Daza, then the Senior Deputy Speaker, helped me revive the PSA Fiesta Fistiana, a tax-free boxing card for the benefit of destitute and disabled boxers. A substantial amount (the biggest ever on record) was raised from the charity card, with the proceeds audited by the accounting firm Sycip Gorres Velayo and Co.

By submitting itself to an audit, the PSA set a fine example for other fund-raisers, eliciting excellent responses from all sectors, notably its generous sponsors.

During his term, Daza batted for the revival of pro boxing in the Philippine by offering inducements so that enterprising people may once more engage in fight promotion.

That plea will not be unheeded this time around.

Starting at 6 p.m. tomorrow, international matchmaker Jun Sarreal will stage a double main event card at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque pitting Filipino boxers against visiting fighters from Indonesia and Thailand.

In the 12-round championship bout, undefeated Rodel Mayol stakes his Orient Pacific Boxing Federation mini-minimweight title against OPBF No. 2 contender Marti Polii of Indonesia. In the other 12-round mainer, Thai No. 2 flyweight Somyot Vor Suapol takes on former Philippine champion Edgar Rodrigo, conqueror of the sensational Z Gorres.

Billed as the next Pa
spoken Mayol is a boxer
Only 23 years old, Cebu
leaving nothing to chance

"*Tatapusin ko siya sa*
rounds (I will stop
rounds)," said the 5-fo
sports an impressive re
wins, 15 by knockouts,
5-2 win-loss-draw slate. In
held in Jakarta, Mayol
three Indonesian oppon
determined to preserve
streak," stressed Mayol
his ring career in the
where he lost only th
fights.

For his part, promoter
"We need to help and de
ers like Mayol. I think he
given the opportunity
world title." At the same

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in the 13th game, setting up game point with a serve-and-volley approach.

She dropped to her knees and punched the air repeatedly when she set up two match points of her own with a winner in the next game.

After finishing off the 2-hour, 39-minute match with a backhand, Williams leaped all the way to the net.

In 2003, Williams saved two match points in a semifinal against Kim Clijsters before reaching the final and beating older sister Venus.

"Two times in a row back from match point down .... this is such a special court for me," Williams said after winning her 13th consecutive match at Melbourne Park.

Sharapova needed only four winners in the first set, earning two service breaks as she blunted most of Williams' power and then only needed to keep the ball in play.

In the first game of the second set, a ballboy bounced a ball at Williams and she smacked it into the stands in pure frustration after losing a point to let Sharapova back to 30-all.

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match imbalance against Hewitt in Friday's semifinal showdown between the world number two and three.

The American second seed has had almost half the on-court workload than the never-say-die Australian in the five matches to the semifinal, but even that might not be enough to fend off Hewitt before his home fans. Roddick has spent a total of 7 hours, 42 minutes on court against Hewitt's 14 hours, and 38-minute court time.

AP

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brushed off the common misconception that Filipino promoters bring foreign boxers here who have no chance of winning. "Polii is rated No. 2 by the OPBF and that speaks very well about his credentials," added Jun Sarreal, son of the late Lope "Papa" Sarreal, the grand old man of boxing. Papa Sarreal, by the way, will be enshrined in the International Boxing Hall of Fame (non-participant category) in Canastota, New York, during glittering ceremonies set June 9 to 12.

The young Mayol, his manager Joy Ouano, Sarreal, Rodrigo and Bangkok lawyer Narong Hengtrakul, handler of Thai boxer Surapol, graced last Tuesday's weekly PSA Forum sponsored by Red Bull and Agfa Color at the Manila Pavilion.

"My boxer (Surapol) is no patsy," Narong assured the media during a prefight interview.

2 eagles lift Ogilvie to top of Classic

NEW YORK—Joe Ogilvie posted two eagles on the way to an eight-under-par 64 which put him in a five-way tie for the lead after the first round of the $4.7 million Bob Hope Classic on Wednesday.

Ogilvie recorded threes at the par-five second and 11th holes to join Ted Purdy, Duffy Waldorf, Fred Funk and Robert Damron at the top of the leaderboard as the 90-hole tournament got under way in La Quinta.

Four par-72 courses, the PGA West, Bermuda Dunes, Tamarisk and La Quinta are being used in this week's event in the Californian desert. Most of Wednesday's leading scores came at the Tamarisk and at Bermuda Dunes.

Five players were one stroke off the pace on seven-under 65, 1998 winner Fred Couples, Franklin Langham, Nick Watney, Neal Lancaster and Britain's Justin Rose.

Defending champion Phil Mickelson was among a group of seven golfers on 66.

With the top four in the world rankings, number one Vijay Singh, Tiger Woods, Ernie Els and Retief Goosen, all taking the week off, Mickelson holds top billing.

The left hander beat Skip Kendall in a playoff here last year before going on to land the US Masters in April.

Mickelson, playing on the Tamarisk course, made a sizzling start with birdies on three of his first six holes, the 12th, 13th and 15th. He also picked up shots at the 18th, first, sixth and seventh but bogeyed the second.

"No matter how hard or how easy a golf course is you've got to make the shots," Mickelson told reporters. "You've still got to make the greens and you've still got to make the putts.

"The recipe for doing well here is just to relax and enjoy the day. Sometimes you just get so intense, so tight on days like this, that it can cost you." Canada's Mike Weir, the winner here in 2003, started out with a one-under 71.

David Duval, who produced a closing 59 to lift the title in 1999, stumbled to a 10-over 82.

Reuters

Honda, Toyota mull F1 rival

LONDON—Japanese car giants Honda and Toyota have sided with manufacturers planning a rival series to Formula One by issuing a joint statement setting out their vision for the sport's future.

While a spokesman for the Grand Prix World Championship (GPWC) said the two had not formally joined BMW, DaimlerChrysler and Renault in the group, Wednesday's statement made clear that they were in agreement.

The move was a boost for the GPWC, whose demise was widely proclaimed after FIAT-owned Ferrari announced last week that they had agreed unilaterally to remain in the existing championship until 2012.

A source close to the carmakers said Ferrari's action, despite being founder members of the GPWC, had fuelled the anger of the Japanese to the extent that they approached their European rivals asking for a meeting.

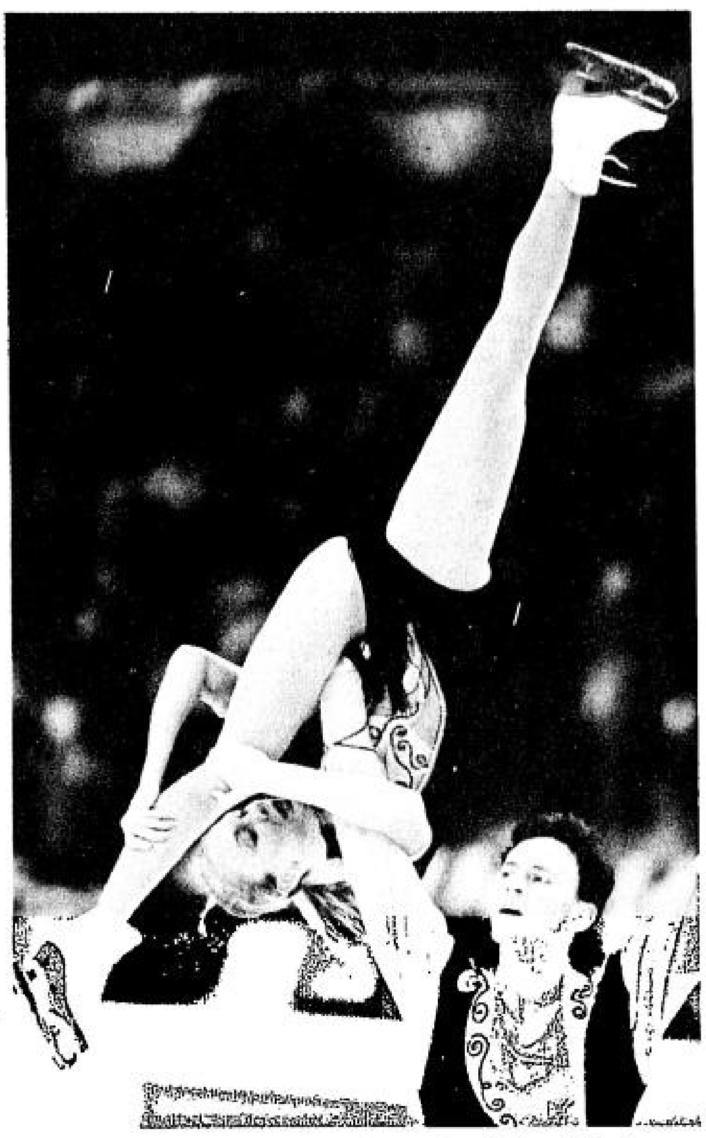
The statement said all five carmakers met to discuss their views about the future after the expiry of the existing 'Concorde Agreement' in 2007 which governs the sport's commercial matters.

"All participants have unanimously agreed upon a comprehensive set of governing principles which they believe represent an appropriate framework for the sport," it said.

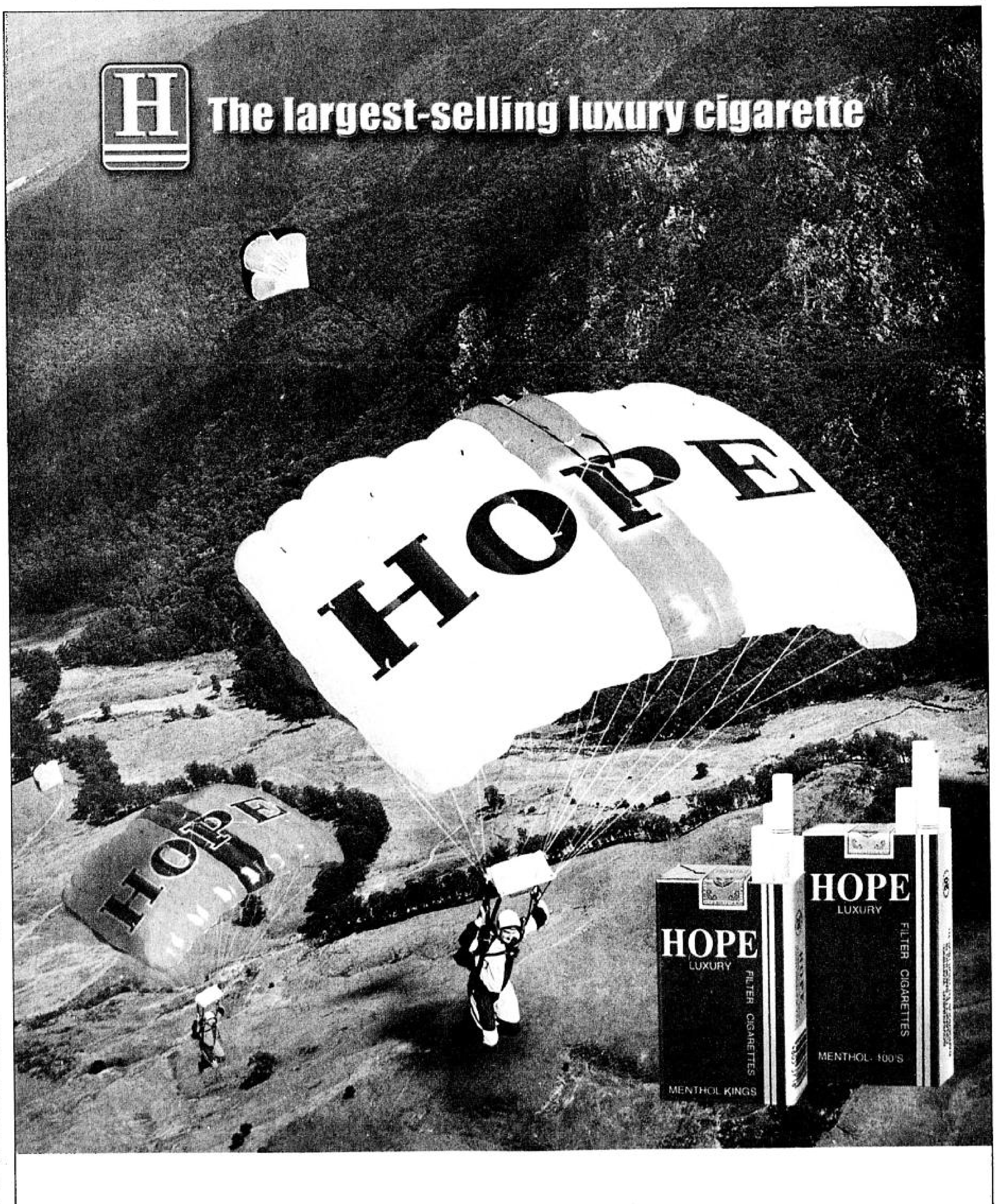
Some of the objectives:

- To keep grand prix motor racing at the pinnacle of motorsport.
- To provide the basis of a long-term plan for the prosperity of grand prix motor racing and its stakeholders.

AP



CHAMPIONS. Russia's Tatiana Totmianina (left) and Maxim Marinin perform their free program at the European figure skating championships pairs final at Palavela stadium in Turin, northern Italy, Jan. 26. They won the gold. REUTERS



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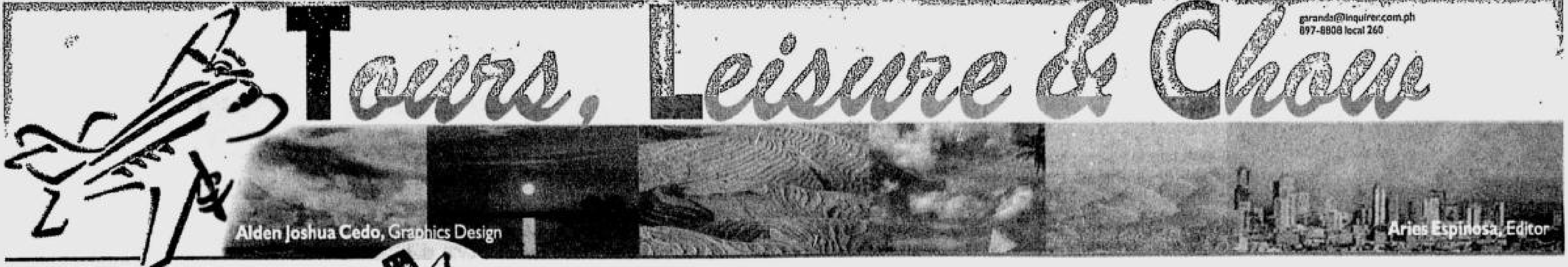

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For meeting and conferences, City Garden Hotel Makati offers flexible meeting rooms for 10 to 120 persons, complete with conference/seminar facilities and professionally-staffed business center with Internet access, fax, and photocopiers, and such services as secretarial assistance, documentation, airline ticket reconfirmation, tours and transport booking, and postal and parcel handling, among others. Meetings packages come for as low as P9,750+ per day,

Somerset donates to typhoon victims

SOMERSET Serviced Residences, Manila demonstrated the Ascott Heartware philosophy of going the extra mile in its latest charity initiative, Ray of Hope. Last month, it conducted a collection drive for clothes and other essential items for those affected by the recent typhoons.

In late 2004, two storms severely damaged the northern communities of Manila, causing many families to lose their homes. The staff at Somerset then initiated the Ray of Hope project to lend a much needed helping hand to the unfortunate victims of these storms.

For two weeks in December last year, guests and staff at Somerset Millennium, Somerset Olympia and Somerset Salcedo donated cash and goods such as blankets and toiletries. The collections were then presented to the Philippine National Red Cross, which coordinated the relief efforts.

Somerset Serviced Residences, Manila, is a member of The Ascott Group, a leading international serviced residence chain with significant presence spanning 40 cities in 17 countries.

A smashing New Year at The Bellevue

AN ALL-OUT entertainment by one of the country's most celebrated singer-comedians, Mitch Valdes, transpired at the Grand Ballroom of The Bellevue Hotel recently. The ballroom was transformed into an amazing arena where a perfect fusion of acoustics, excellent food and consummate service occurred. Veteran host Johnny Litton introduced Mitch Valdes who made the night perfect with her melodious voice as she lashed out tunes that range from classical to jazz and amused everyone with her legendary comical jabs. A snowstorm of confetti, which showered the guests and made the night more festive as Mitch Valdes led the New Year Countdown. The presence of affluence was felt as Alabang's well-heeled turned up in the hotel to greet the New Year.

Close to 1000 guests stopped in awe at the BMW Series 1 displayed at the lobby in all its magnificent glory. Thirsty folks got their fill thanks to Eliza Rivero of San Miguel, who supplied the drinks that flowed limitless throughout the night. Credit also goes to other sponsors namely, Pepsi, Smart, Nescafe, 105.1 Crossover and the Philippine Daily Inquirer who all made the evening more significant with their generosity.

Dusit Nikko treat for Chinese New Year

A TOAST for the picturesque Chinese New Year 2005. Join and feast, with the whole family, as Dusit Hotel Nikko welcomes the "Year of the Rooster." Happening at the Café Restaurant on Feb. 8 until 10, experience authentic Chinese cuisine on these selected dates. Available for lunch and dinner, these sumptuous recipes are valued at P850 ++ per person. A complimentary "tikoy" awaits group diners with a minimum of four (4) persons. While for pastry lovers, take-out and crave for best-selling delectable Chinese goodies at the Deli Shop. For reservations, please contact The Café Restaurant at 867-3333 extension 3346.

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THE EXECUTIVE Plaza Hotel, Palm Plaza Hotel and Las Palmas Hotel collectively known as The Palm Hotels is offering its best value package for the upcoming Junior and Senior Night. For as low as P26,221, they guarantee a special, memorable event that is hassle free and affordable. For reservations and inquiries, call the Banquet Office at 521-1000 (Las Palmas Hotel), 522-1000 (Palm Plaza Hotel) and 523-1000 (The Executive Plaza Hotel). At The Palm Hotels Banquet... they make wonderful memories possible.

Good luck treats for 2005 at City Garden Suites

CITY Garden Suites, world-class hotel/suites, located at the heart of Manila Business District, offers wonderful promotions and packages to start your year right.

Japanese is it! For the Café Miranda as it offers a wide-range of Bento box choices for only P250 inclusive of red iced tea and dessert. Their expert chef offers freshly made sushi and sashimi done right before your eyes.

For local and foreign business travelers on the go, the hotel offers Standard Room as low as P1,600 inclusive of breakfast.

For Family get-together, the hotel's Penthouse Suites are quite a treat at P6,000. Accommodation includes buffet breakfast, fruit basket, and complimentary stay for children below 18 years of age, free use of KTV and Internet for 1 hour and shuttle service to the nearest mall.

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Km. 60 Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City
Tel. (632) 886-4325, (6346) 413-1000
Email : taalvista@fuegohotels.com

Summer Place Hotel
Km. 288 Marcos Highway, Baguio City
Tel. :(074) 446.0560, 446.5400-01
www.SummerPlaceBaguio.com

Affordable luxury in 2005

AS A New Year offer, City Garden Hotel Makati is offering busy executives its first class amenities at attractive and affordable rates.

For as low as P1,350 per person on a twin-sharing basis, one can enjoy the hotel's tastefully elegant guest rooms and facilities, inclusive of a choice of free sumptuous buffet breakfast for two or a Spa service at the hotel's Body & Face by Mendez, free use of its open-air swimming pool at the Roofdeck and its fully equipped Gym.

For meeting and conferences, City Garden Hotel Makati offers flexible meeting rooms for 10 to 120 persons, complete with conference/seminar facilities and professionally-staffed business center with Internet access, fax, and photocopiers, and such services as secretarial assistance, documentation, airline ticket reconfirmation, tours and transport booking, and postal and parcel handling, among others. Meetings packages come for as low as P9,750+ per day,

Somerset donates to typhoon victims

SOMERSET Serviced Residences, Manila demonstrated the Ascott Heartware philosophy of going the extra mile in its latest charity initiative, Ray of Hope. Last month, it conducted a collection drive for clothes and other essential items for those affected by the recent typhoons.

In late 2004, two storms severely damaged the northern communities of Manila, causing many families to lose their homes. The staff at Somerset then initiated the Ray of Hope project to lend a much needed helping hand to the unfortunate victims of these storms.

For two weeks in December last year, guests and staff at Somerset Millennium, Somerset Olympia and Somerset Salcedo donated cash and goods such as blankets and toiletries. The collections were then presented to the Philippine National Red Cross, which coordinated the relief efforts.

Somerset Serviced Residences, Manila, is a member of The Ascott Group, a leading international serviced residence chain with significant presence spanning 40 cities in 17 countries.

A smashing New Year at The Bellevue

AN ALL-OUT entertainment by one of the country's most celebrated singer-comedians, Mitch Valdes, transpired at the Grand Ballroom of The Bellevue Hotel recently. The ballroom was transformed into an amazing arena where a perfect fusion of acoustics, excellent food and consummate service occurred. Veteran host Johnny Litton introduced Mitch Valdes who made the night perfect with her melodious voice as she lashed out tunes that range from classical to jazz and amused everyone with her legendary comical jabs. A snowstorm of confetti, which showered the guests and made the night more festive as Mitch Valdes led the New Year Countdown. The presence of affluence was felt as Alabang's well-heeled turned up in the hotel to greet the New Year.

Close to 1000 guests stopped in awe at the BMW Series 1 displayed at the lobby in all its magnificent glory. Thirsty folks got their fill thanks to Eliza Rivero of San Miguel, who supplied the drinks that flowed limitless throughout the night. Credit also goes to other sponsors namely, Pepsi, Smart, Nescafe, 105.1 Crossover and the Philippine Daily Inquirer who all made the evening more significant with their generosity.

Dusit Nikko treat for Chinese New Year

A TOAST for the picturesque Chinese New Year 2005. Join and feast, with the whole family, as Dusit Hotel Nikko welcomes the "Year of the Rooster." Happening at the Café Restaurant on Feb. 8 until 10, experience authentic Chinese cuisine on these selected dates. Available for lunch and dinner, these sumptuous recipes are valued at P850 ++ per person. A complimentary "tikoy" awaits group diners with a minimum of four (4) persons. While for pastry lovers, take-out and crave for best-selling delectable Chinese goodies at the Deli Shop. For reservations, please contact The Café Restaurant at 867-3333 extension 3346.

The Palm Hotels present... Night of the Senior and Junior Prom

THE EXECUTIVE Plaza Hotel, Palm Plaza Hotel and Las Palmas Hotel collectively known as The Palm Hotels is offering its best value package for the upcoming Junior and Senior Night. For as low as P26,221, they guarantee a special, memorable event that is hassle free and affordable. For reservations and inquiries, call the Banquet Office at 521-1000 (Las Palmas Hotel), 522-1000 (Palm Plaza Hotel) and 523-1000 (The Executive Plaza Hotel). At The Palm Hotels Banquet... they make wonderful memories possible.

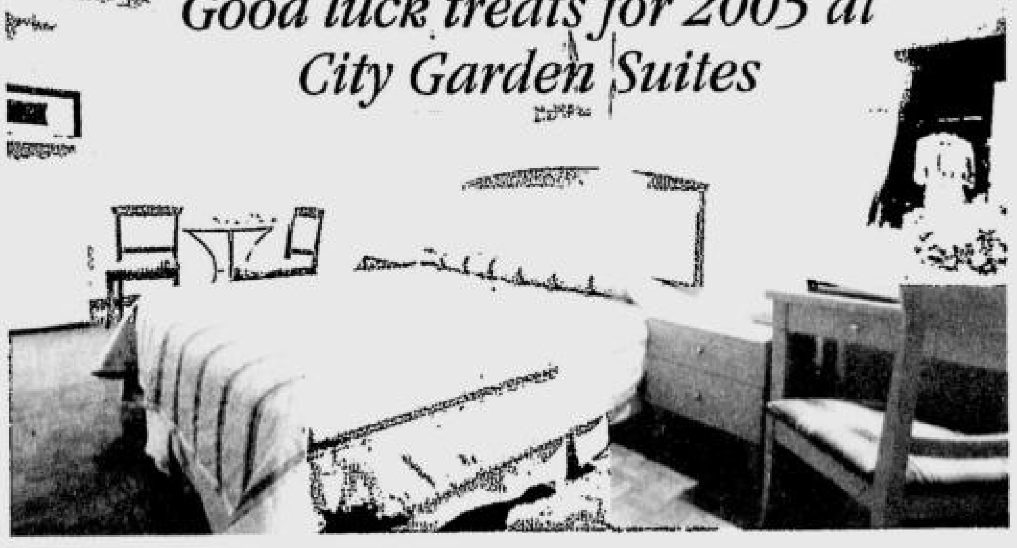
Good luck treats for 2005 at City Garden Suites

CITY Garden Suites, world-class hotel/suites, located at the heart of Manila Business District, offers wonderful promotions and packages to start your year right.

Japanese is it! For the Café Miranda as it offers a wide-range of Bento box choices for only P250 inclusive of red iced tea and dessert. Their expert chef offers freshly made sushi and sashimi done right before your eyes.

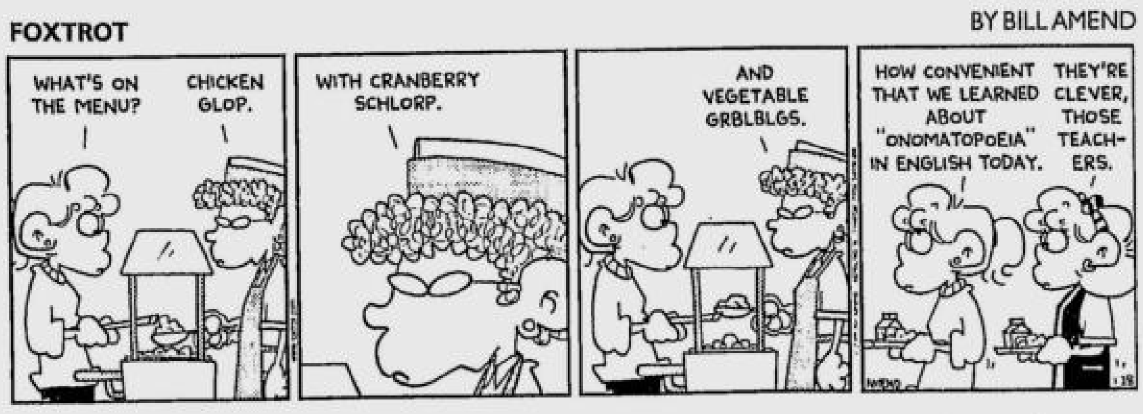
For local and foreign business travelers on the go, the hotel offers Standard Room as low as P1,600 inclusive of breakfast.

For Family get-together, the hotel's Penthouse Suites are quite a treat at P6,000. Accommodation includes buffet breakfast, fruit basket, and complimentary stay for children below 18 years of age, free use of KTV and Internet for 1 hour and shuttle service to the nearest mall.



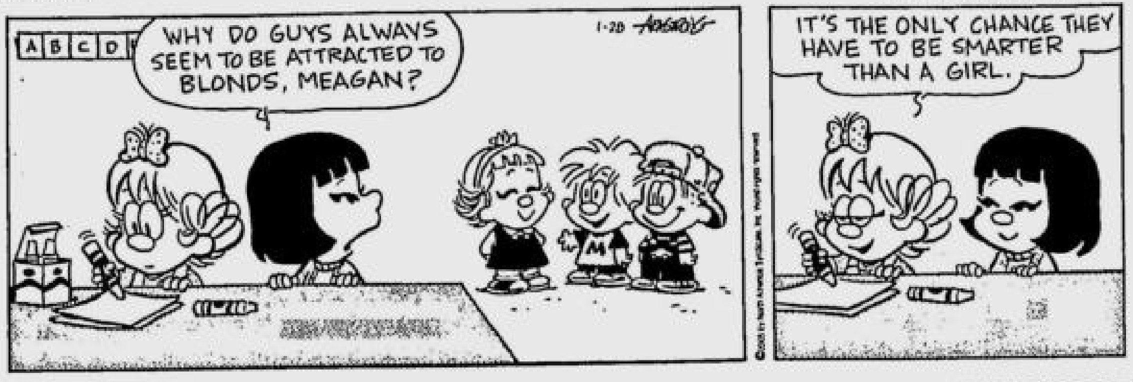
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHAT'S ON THE MENU?
CHICKEN GLOP.
WITH CRANBERRY SCHLORP.
AND VEGETABLE GRBLBLGS.
HOW CONVENIENT THAT WE LEARNED ABOUT "ONOMATOPOEIA" IN ENGLISH TODAY.
THEY'RE CLEVER, THOSE TEACHERS.

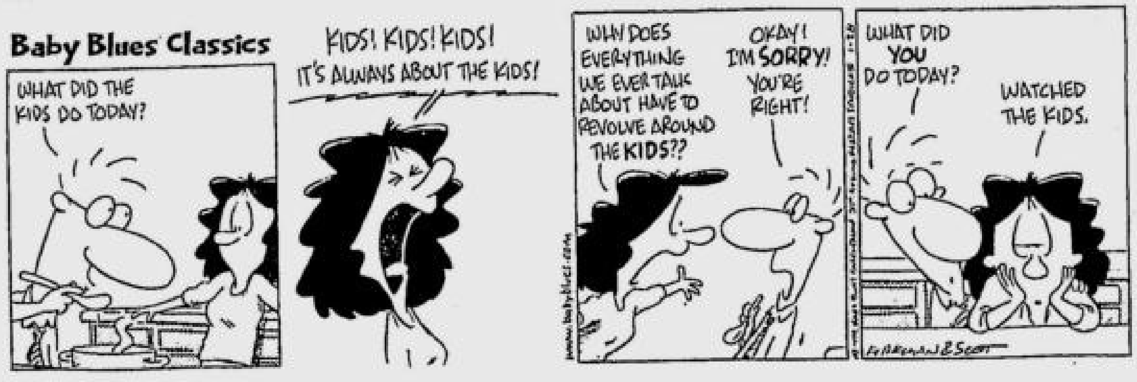
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


A B C D
WHY DO GUYS ALWAYS SEEM TO BE ATTRACTED TO BLONDS, MEAGAN?
1-28
IT'S THE ONLY CHANCE THEY HAVE TO BE SMARTER THAN A GIRL.

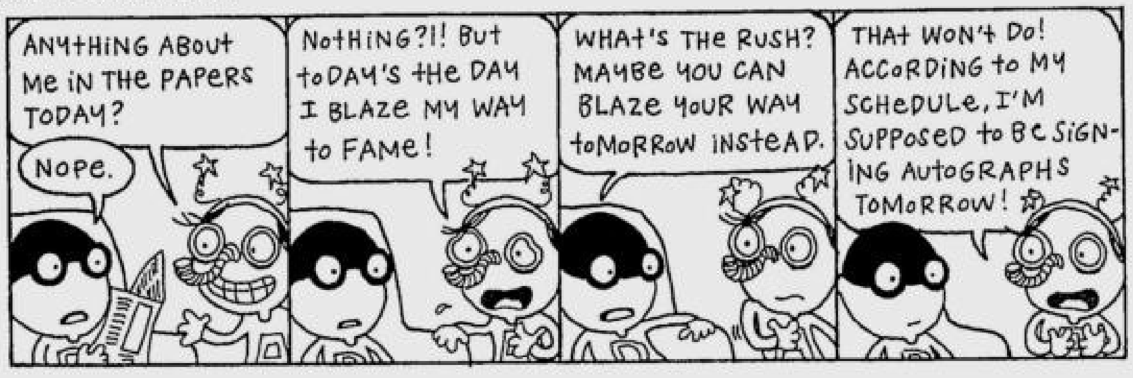
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


Baby Blues Classics
WHAT DID THE KIDS DO TODAY?
KIDS! KIDS! KIDS! IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT THE KIDS!
WHY DOES EVERYTHING WE EVER TALK ABOUT HAVE TO REVOLVE AROUND THE KIDS??
OKAY! I'M SORRY! YOU'RE RIGHT!
WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?
WATCHED THE KIDS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


ANYTHING ABOUT ME IN THE PAPERS TODAY?
NOPE.
NOTHING?!! BUT TODAY'S THE DAY I BLAZE MY WAY TO FAME!
WHAT'S THE RUSH? MAYBE YOU CAN BLAZE YOUR WAY TOMORROW INSTEAD.
THAT WON'T DO! ACCORDING TO MY SCHEDULE, I'M SUPPOSED TO BE SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS TOMORROW!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are strong-willed, determined, motivated—even driven to reach your very high goals. But you're gutsy! Because of this, you're capable of extraordinary achievements. You believe in yourself. Your willpower and determination are phenomenal. This year, you will wrap up certain stages of your life in order to prepare for something new.

Birthdate of: Colette, writer; Arthur Rubinstein, pianist; Mikhail Baryshnikov, ballet dancer/actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Avoid religious and political arguments today. Just because you believe in something very strongly doesn't mean that others have to agree with you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're willing to move heaven and earth today to make some kind of improvement to something you own, or perhaps even to your health. You have tons of energy.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Avoid arguments with others today. People think they know what's best for each other. This includes you. (Just lighten up.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You have enormous energy today, and you want to make reforms and improvements to where you work. Similarly, you might want to improve your body in some way.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You feel determined to tell others something today. You especially want to teach children something. Make sure you don't fall into power struggles with others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is an excellent day to fix whatever needs to be repaired at home. You can also improve how you do things at home. (This particularly applies to bathrooms and plumbing.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You can't help being quite pushy today. You're adamant about getting others to agree with you. But there are none so deaf as those who wear headphones.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You will put out amazing energy today in order to do something to earn money. This is the kind of day when you can move mountains and build bridges. Go for it!

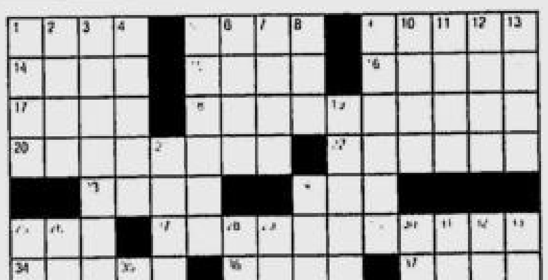
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have enormous energy today! You're definitely a force to be reckoned with. Use this energy to build and construct, and do things you want to do; don't use this energy to bully others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good day to work alone or work behind the scenes. You can set the stage so that things will turn your way in the future.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Ego struggles or conflict with a friend are likely today, because agreement about something is impossible. Why even go there? Friends don't have to agree on everything.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your ambition is quite amazing today. You're determined to do something, and nothing can stop you. Let's hope your motivation is the highest.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Roger Jurgovan
Potomac, MD

1/28/05

ACROSS
1 Ritzy
5 Hurtin'
9 Sound like a bird
14 Nice girlfriend?
15 Pouting grimace
16 Son of Osiris
17 Made known
18 One full of himself
20 Tote bags
22 Lock in dials
23 Lock maker
24 Minor spasm
25 Periodical, briefly
27 Hollow gift
34 African succulents
36 Center
37 Kindle call
38 Compact Dodge
39 Filmy, impure layers
40 Laid off
41 __ facto
42 Storytelling dance
43 Different
44 Inscrutable smiler
47 Part of CBS?
48 Affirmative
49 Fact fabricator
51 Rebukes
55 Obliterations
59 Forceless force
61 Solemn ceremony
62 Sphere of operation
63 Per __ (for each day)
64 Bancroft or Baxter
65 Like a standoff
66 Inquires
67 My word!

DOWN
1 Woodland way
2 Melville novel
3 Foolish barnyard squawker
4 Gabler of fiction
5 More spacious
6 Lose heat
7 Buzzes
8 Informal assent
9 Place of worship
10 "Backdraft" prop
11 Gershwin and Levin
12 Sly plan
13 Hey, over here!
19 Voices one's thoughts
21 Contingencies: abbr.
24 Landing strip
25 Frenzied
26 First Hebrew letter
28 Happens
29 Thermal energy unit
30 Do not include
31 Fishy diversion?
32 Cobbler's stockpile
33 Pitchers
35 Slaughter in Cooperstown
39 Most diffident
43 Elevator man?
45 Freshwater polyps
46 Warning devices
50 Nimbi
51 Till
52 Custody
53 Aboveboard
54 Eye part
55 Sponsorship
56 Stink
57 Sicilian landmark
58 Potential plant
60 Actress/director Lupino

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

R	E	B	A	■	E	N	A	C	T	■	J	A	M	B
A	X	I	S	■	A	R	R	O	W	■	O	R	E	O
J	U	S	T	P	R	A	I	S	E	■	S	E	A	L
A	D	O	R	E	S	■	■	E	N	C	H	A	N	T
S	E	N	O	R	■	W	A	L	T	Z	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	I	S	O	N	L	Y	A	D	E	B	T
B	L	I	S	■	P	O	X	■	■	R	A	Z	O	R
L	U	A	U	■	A	L	I	A	S	■	B	R	I	O
A	L	F	R	I	■	■	E	P	I	■	G	A	I	T
B	U	T	F	L	A	T	T	E	R	Y	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	L	L	O	Y	D	■	A	N	O	D	E
L	U	N	I	A	B	S	■	■	E	L	O	P	E	S
A	X	E	L	■	I	S	A	P	R	E	S	E	N	T
S	E	R	F	■	N	U	K	E	S	■	E	R	I	E
K	N	O	X	■	O	P	A	R	T	■	D	A	M	E

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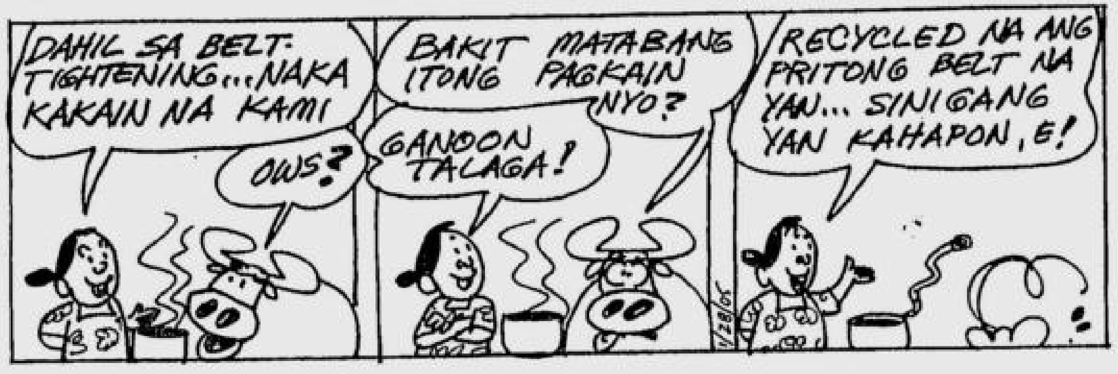
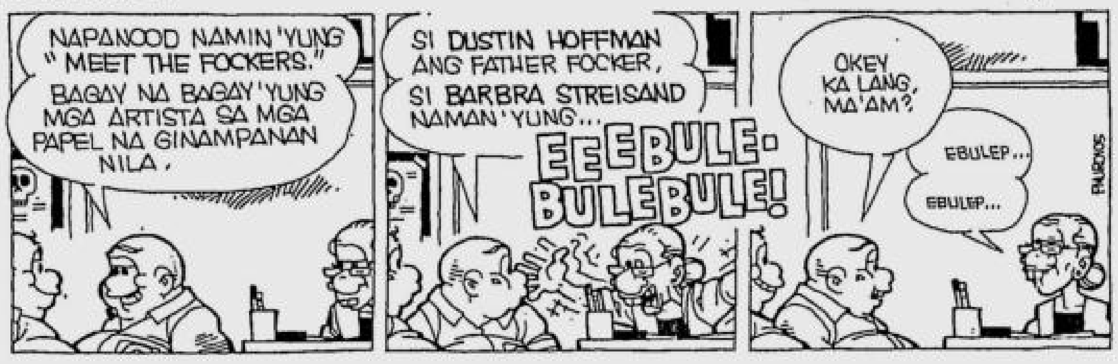
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DAHIL SA BELT-TIGHTENING...NAKA KAKAIN NA KAMI
OWS?
BAKIT MATABANG ITONG PAGKAIN NYO?
GANOON TALAGA!
RECYCLED NA ANG PRITONG BELT NA YAN... SINIGANG YAN KAHAPON, E!

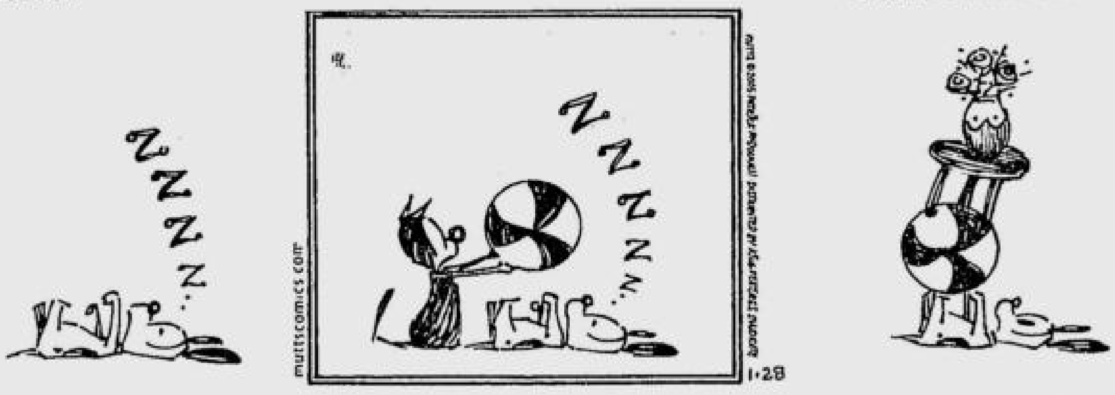
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAPANOOD NAMIN 'YUNG "MEET THE FOCKERS." BAGAY NA BAGAY 'YUNG MGA ARTISTA SA MGA PAPEL NA GINAMPANAN NILA.
SI DUSTIN HOFFMAN ANG FATHER FOCKER, SI BARBRA STREISAND NAMAN 'YUNG...
EEEBULE-BULEBULE!
OKEY KA LANG, MA'AM?
EBULEP...
EBULEP...

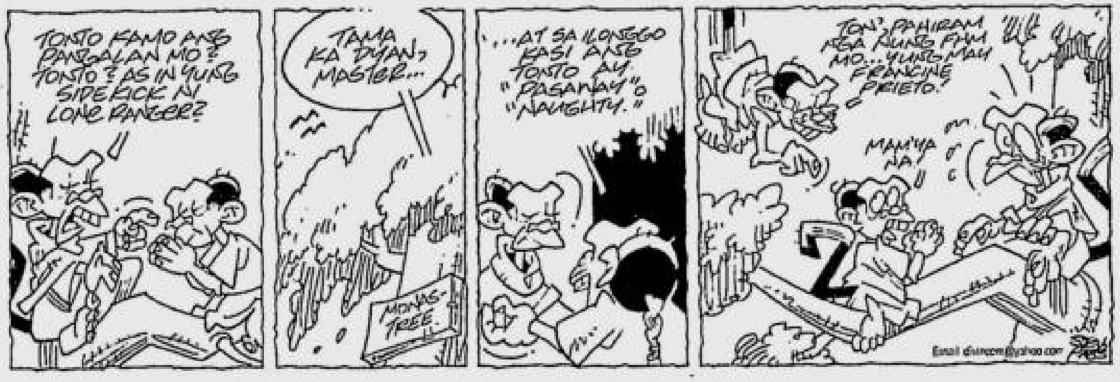
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ZZZZ
ZZZZZ
mutts comics.com
1-28

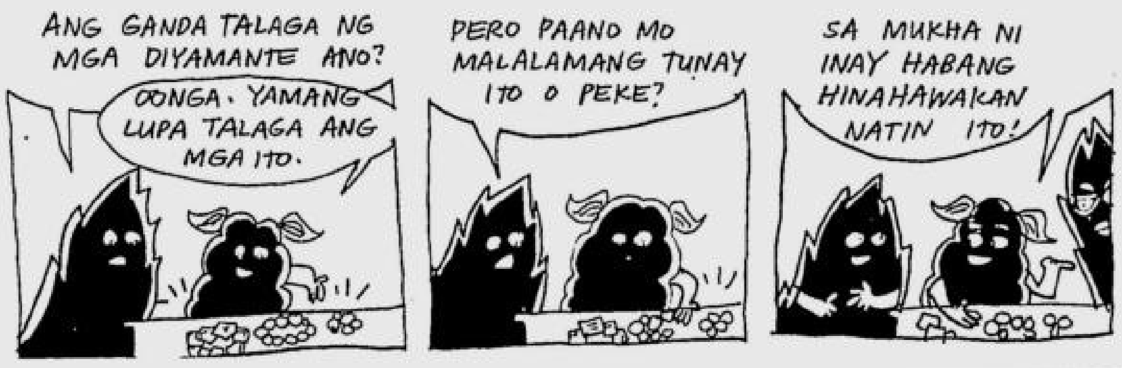
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TONTO KAMO ANG PANGALAN MO? TONTO? AS IN YUNG SIDEKICK NI LONE RANGER?
TAMA KA DYAN, MASTER...
MONAS TREE
...AT SA ILONGGO KASI ANG TONTO AY "PASANAY" O "NAUGHTY."
TON, PAHIRAM NGA NUNG FHM MO... YUNG MAY FRANCINE PRIETO.
MAM'YA NA!

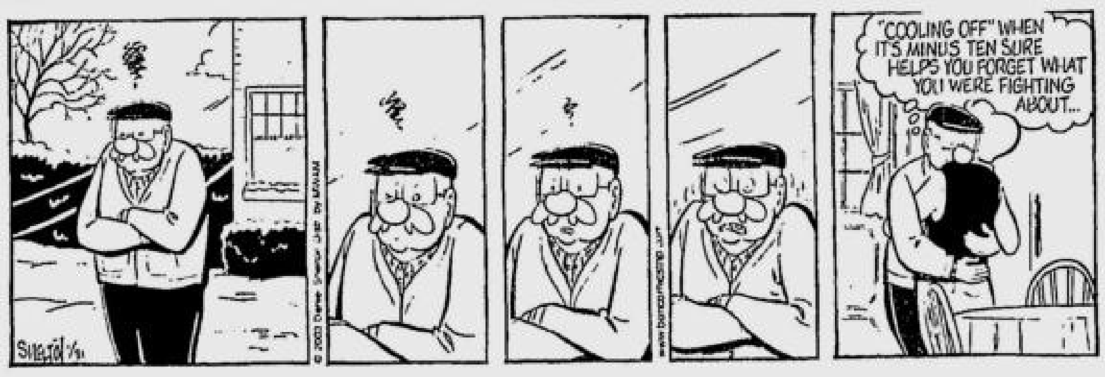
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG GANDA TALAGA NG MGA DIYAMANTE ANO?
OONGA. YAMANG LUPA TALAGA ANG MGA ITO.
PERO PAANO MO MALALAMANG TUNAY ITO O PEKE?
SA MUKHA NI INAY HABANG HINAHAWAKAN NATIN ITO!

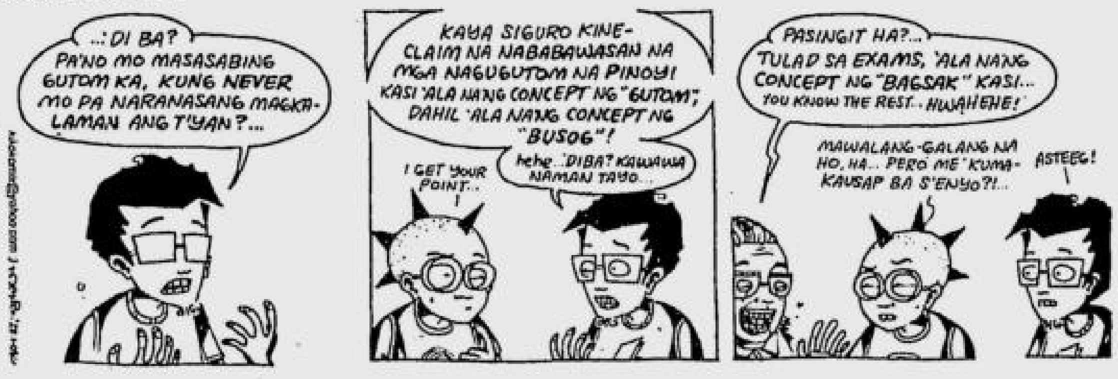
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


"COOLING OFF" WHEN IT'S MINUS TEN SURE HELPS YOU FORGET WHAT YOU WERE FIGHTING ABOUT...

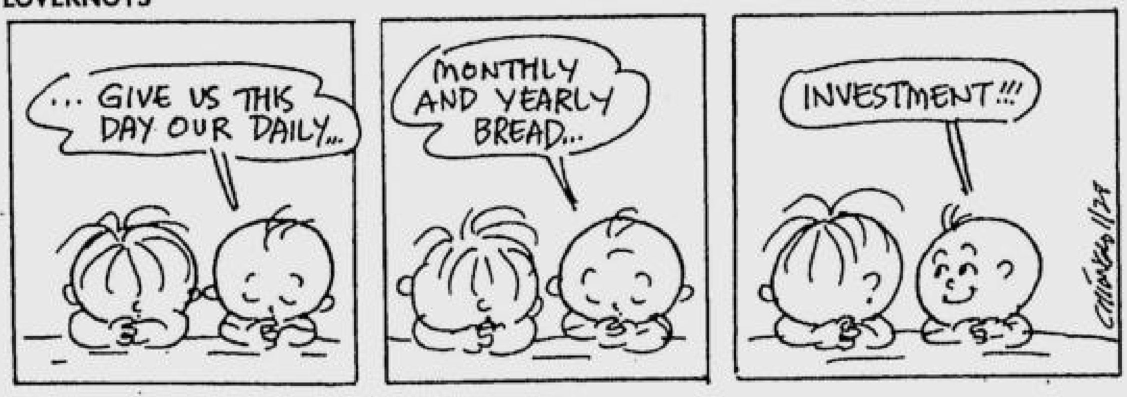
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


..: DI BA? PA'NO MO MASASABING GUTOM KA, KUNG NEVER MO PA NARANASANG MAGKA-LAMAN ANG T'YAN?...
KAYA SIGURO KINE-CLAIM NA NABABAWASAN NA MGA NAGUGUTOM NA PINOY! KASI 'ALA NANG CONCEPT NG "GUTOM"; DAHIL 'ALA NANG CONCEPT NG "BUSOG"!
I GET YOUR POINT...
hehe..DIBA? KAWAWA NAMAN TAYO...
PASINGIT HA?... TULAD SA EXAMS, 'ALA NANG CONCEPT NG "BAGSAK" KASI... YOU KNOW THE REST.. HWAHEHE!
MAWALANG-GALANG NA HO, HA... PERO ME' KUMA-KAUSAP BA S'ENYO?!...
ASTEEG!

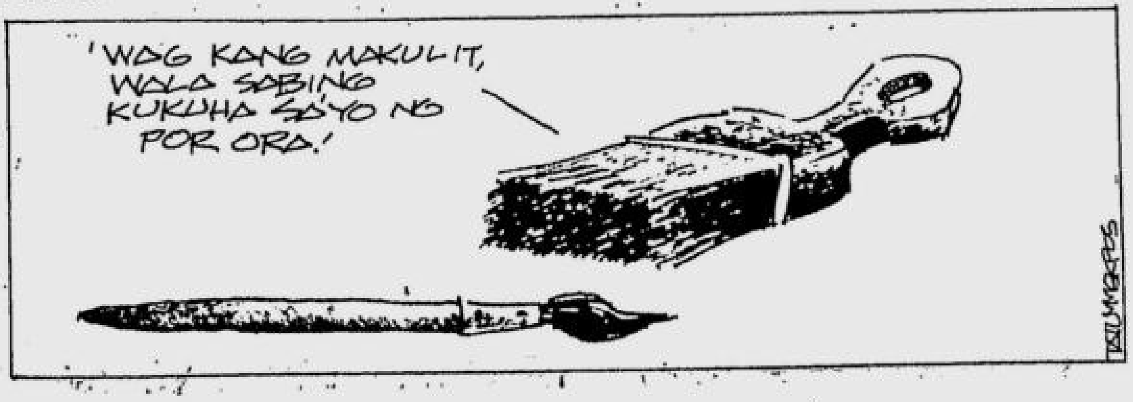
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


... GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY...
MONTHLY AND YEARLY BREAD...
INVESTMENT!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'WAG KANG MAKULIT, WALA SABING KUKUHA SA'YO NG POR ORA!

Montgomerie surges ahead; Que 5 shots off

SINGAPORE—Defending champion Colin Montgomerie made a brilliant start to his season with a flawless seven-under-par 65 in the $1-million Caltex Masters Singapore on Thursday.

The 41-year-old Scot birdied three of the four par-threes on the Laguna National course to race three strokes clear of his nearest rivals midway through the opening round of the event co-sanctioned by the Asian and European tours.

England's Nick Dougherty and Mark Foster were next best on four-under-par 68.

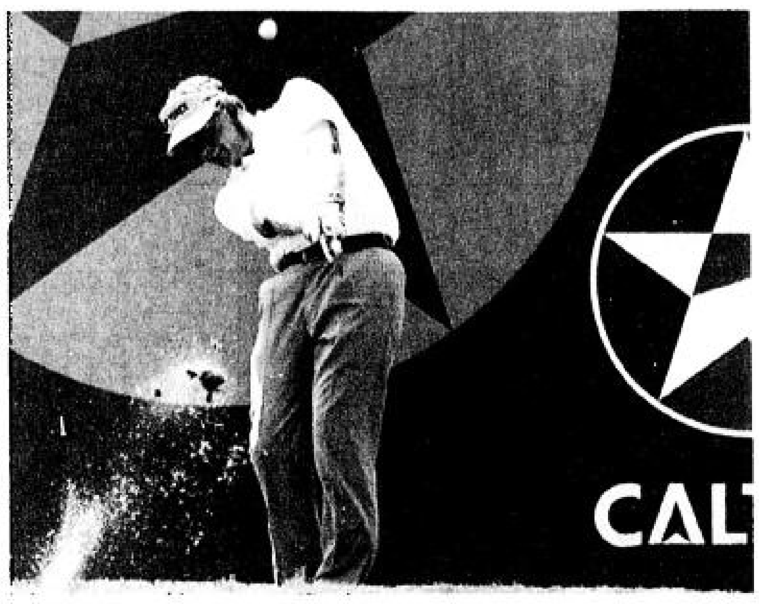
Filipino Angelo Que birdied the 18th hole en route to a 70 and a share of 11th place with nine others, including European Ryder Cup hero Lee Westwood.

Que, winner of the Vietnam Open last December, also birdied holes 2, 4, 6 and 13 to compensate for his bogey-6 on the 3rd and double bogey-7 on the 11th.

Dougherty, who was fourth in last week's South African Open, and Foster also turned in bogey-free rounds.

Montgomerie, who took 29 putts on Thursday, is seeking to retain the only title he won last year.

He is competing for the first time since December's Target World Challenge in California.



COLIN Montgomerie tees of on the 16th hole. AFP

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rivermaya
kitchie nadal
christian bautista
nina
paolo santos
the dawn
pido
passage
king
side a
and many more...

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tunogname1 tunogname2 kitchiename paololist albumsidea artstrongalbum barbiealbum ninasmile pidoalbum dawnalbum

Wallpaper: Text W <keyword> to 2346
Ex.: W tunoginpink to 2346
tunoginpink tunogstripes artstrongalbum tunogartists2 pidoalbum kitchiealbum tunogalbum paoloalbum albumsidea tunogartists1 ninasmile dawnalbum albumnina barbiealbum barbieplay

Icons: Text L <keyword> to 2346 Ex: L tunogname1 to 2346
tunogname1 tunogname2 kitchiename paololist albumsidea artstrongname barbiealbum ninasmile pidoalbum dawnalbum

Tones: Ringtone-Text N <keyword> to 2346 Polytone-Text P <keyword> to 2346
Ex.: Ringtone-Text N close to 2346 Polytone-Text P close to 2346

SONGTITLE	ARTIST	KEYWORD
Wag na Wag Mong Sasabihin	Kitchie Nadal	wagnawag
Close	Paolo Santos	close
Tulad ng Dati	The Dawn	tuladngdati
Sayang Naman	Nina	sayangnaman
Sukob Na	17:28	sukobna
All I need	Barbie's Cradle	allineed
Don't Go	Viktoria	dontgo
You Won't See Me Crying	Passage	uwontsee
Liwanag Sa Dilim	Rivermaya	liwanag

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2. Text GO <handset model> to 2951 to get your phone's settings. Ex. GO N3650. For Nokia 3220, 6220, 6230, 6600, 6820, 6260, 7200 and 7610 text GO <handset model>,,1234 to 2951. Make sure that you type in the two commas before the 1234 PIN.
3. Enter 1234 when asked for PIN to save the settings.
4. Send an MMS message for only 3.00 to activate the service.

Tunog Acoustic 3
From the biggest selling acoustic series that started it all, with previously unreleased acoustic versions of your favorite OPM songs including Liwanag sa Dilim by Rivermaya, Wag na Wag Mong Sasabihin by Kitchie Nadal, Tulad ng Dati by the Dawn, Hands to Heaven by Christian Bautista and many more. Album out now.

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See flyers for details. Promo extended until Feb. 27, 2005. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0015, Series of 2005.

1st National Caddies tilt set Monday

THE NATIONAL Caddies' Open will crown its first-ever champion at the end of next week, and the organization guarantees that he and the others falling under its long-term program will be able to act, think and speak like one.

"Molding them into great golfers is just half of the job," said Ben Abalos, NCO co-chair. "We will make them better persons, people with self-esteem and confidence."

"We want them to be able to conduct themselves properly, especially when we send them to tournaments abroad," added Abalos.

ABALOS PDI PHOTO

Aside from swing guru Bong Lopez taking over their training, comprehensive English and math courses and proper demeanor will be taught as part of the program the organizing Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation has drawn up.

The 72-hole event, presented by Pagcor and the First Gentleman Sports Foundation and backed by San Miguel Corp. and the Philippine Sports Commission, officially gets off the ground with the sponsors' tournament on Monday at Calatagan.

"How our champions conduct themselves will reflect in the way we will care for them," said the other NCO chair, Hermie Esguerra, the Herma Group head and CEO, who is also known as a top horseowner.

Abalos, Esguerra and businessman Tony Arevalo came up with this unique after-tournament program which will be carried out by Tommy Manotoc's PAGDF.

The participants are requested to be at the Villamor Golf Club parking lot by 5 a.m. on Monday (Jan. 31). The shuttle buses leave at exactly 5:30 a.m. for Calatagan.

Batangas Gov. Armand Sanchez has personally been invited by Abalos to take part in hitting the ceremonial drives together with FG Mike Arroyo, Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino and former Ambassador Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

More than 100 entries will tee off in the first round on Tuesday at Calatagan, where the sleeping quarters of the participants have been arranged through Dave Hernandez.

The NCO will take the top three placers of its first tournament and put them in the program.

The Calatagan complex will be their home for at least the following year while they hone their skills to compete in bigger events both here and abroad.

Manotoc lifts RP to fourth

MATTHEW Manotoc fired a four-over-par 76 Wednesday and boosted the Philippines to solo fourth place in the 2005 World Junior Golf Team Championship Asian Regional pre-qualifying at the Orna Golf and Country Club in Malacca, Malaysia.

IG Gutierrez posted a 79 under the difficult conditions and Gino Bunyi counted as the third score with his 83 for a 238 for the day and a 477 total for three days.

India banked on the 75s of Bhular and Sing Rai to score 230 and seize the top spot from Taiwan at 465. Taiwan had 231-461, and Korea tallied 234-473.

"We're not too close to target but we'll keep trying," said team captain Gerry Handog. "The boys are really trying their best and Matthew's round today is proof of that."

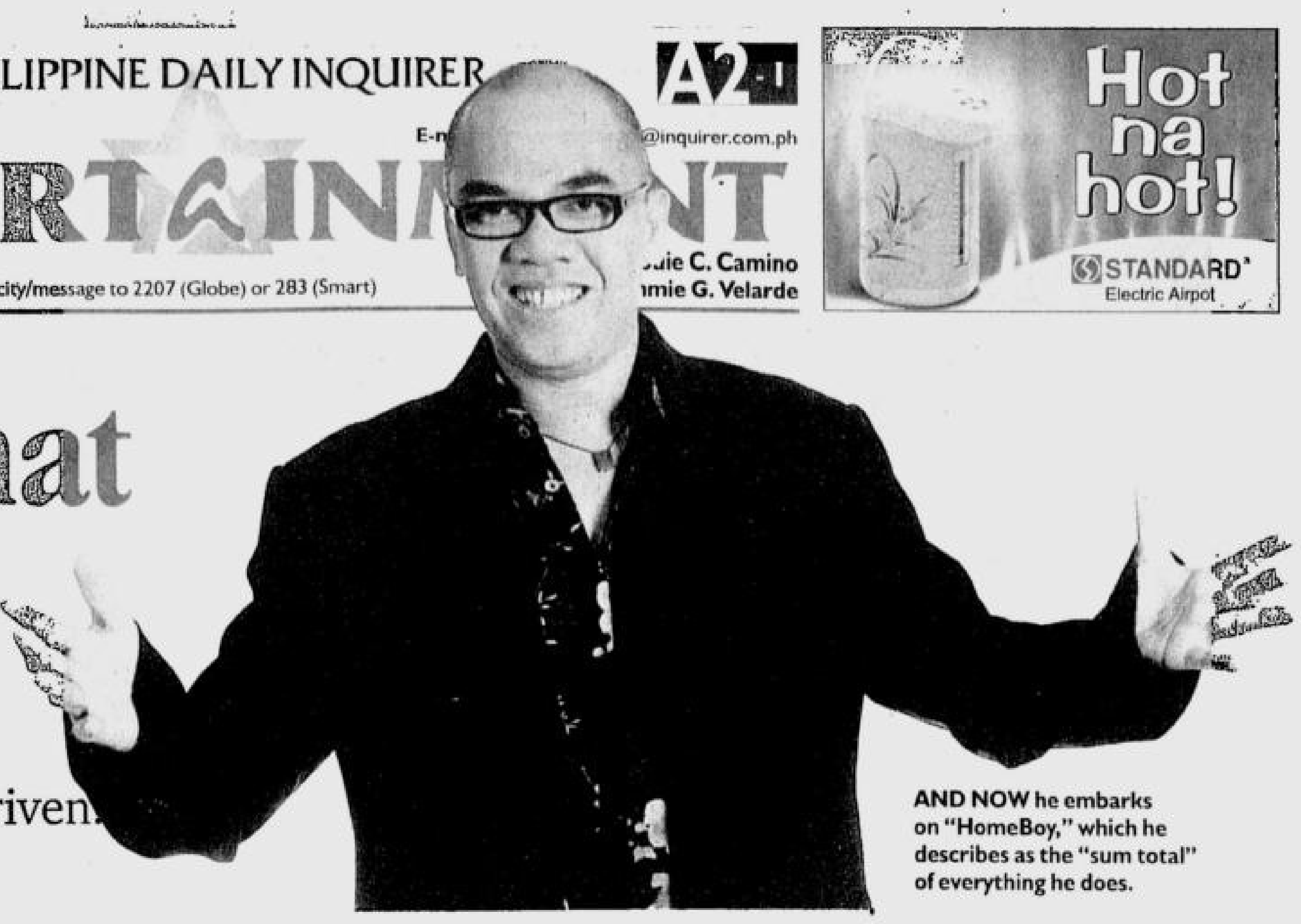
The top two finishers here will advance to the tournament proper in Japan later in the year.

Nilaga na masarap
pero walang hirap.
STANDARD
Pressure Cooker

Hot
na
hot!
STANDARD
Electric Airpot

Boy gets what he wants

'I know I talk very fast. That can be a disadvantage. But I work hard. I'm very driven. I drive my staff to the brink of insanity'



AND NOW he embarks on "HomeBoy," which he describes as the "sum total" of everything he does.

By Marinel R. Cruz

WHATEVER Boy Abunda wants, Boy Abunda gets.

When ABS-CBN offered him last November to host a daily morning show for one season, Boy said he wanted a show he could host for one year.

The Kapamilya network agreed.

"It's not fair for talk show hosts," explained Boy, implying that one season, which is equivalent to only 13 weeks, is not long enough to assess if a show is doing well or not. "I don't call it a one-year contract. It's a one-year commitment."

This is why Boy admitted he is feeling "jittery after a long, long time on television."

Talks too much, too fast

Starting Monday, Boy is hosting "HomeBoy," a 45-minute program where the audience will see him "talk more, move around more, and listen more."

"Yes, I am feeling the jitters," he said. "This show is new to me. It's like I'm starting all over again. It's hard to describe 'HomeBoy' in a phrase. It is a combination of many concepts.

"As a host, I know I also have to acknowledge my weaknesses. I know I talk too much. *Pero nabawasan na 'yan* through the years. That's why I dream for 'HomeBoy' to be a show where I could just listen. I hope to have a participative audience.

"I also know that I talk very fast. That too can be a disadvantage. But I work hard. I'm very driven. I drive my staff to the brink of insanity. I'm very involved in the stories."

Boy said his bosses at ABS-CBN had asked him to do "HomeBoy" as early as November last year. "But I couldn't do it then because of my tight schedule," he said. "But when I found out that I could do advanced tapings for five episodes in two days, I said another show was possible.

"I told them [ABS-CBN bosses], I would listen to what the audience wants. If in one month, the audience would say, '*gusto ko ito*,' we would continue with what we're doing. If not, we'd try to analyze. *Pakikiramdaman ko. Pagbubutihan ang mga* shows. *Pag-aaralan kung saan kami papunta* based on what the audience feels toward the show."

Busy, busy

Boy is one of ABS-CBN's busiest talents, hosting "The Buzz" with Kris Aquino every Sunday, "Kontrobersyal" every Saturday, and "Private Conversations" every Thursday.

He is also a judge on "Star Circle Quest," which will air its final episode for this year on Saturday.

According to Boy, his new show is basically talk material. "But I also want it to be an inspiring talk show. I don't think there is a talk show that hasn't been done yet . In this show, I intend to talk more to the audience. I intend to move around more. I don't want to be sedentary.

"On 'The Buzz,' I'm a fan, a manager and a member of the show biz family. When I do 'Kontrobersyal,' it's the trying-hard, hardworking journalist in me who gets into the stories and behind the stories. On 'Private Conversations,' you see the conversationalist, the person interested in the most interesting and uninteresting of topics.

"'HomeBoy' for me is the sum total of everything I do," he said. "There are things I bring with me to this show. I want to share all the good and bad experiences that I've been through, my being a *probinsyano* at heart and my being a mama's boy."

Relationships, beauty

Boy said that in the first episode of "HomeBoy," the show would discuss relationships of children with their mothers and caretakers.

"I think it's about time we challenged the role of mothers who are very busy working and *yayas* who sometimes don't know their limitations," he said. "We were able to find children who openly say they love their *yayas* more than their moms."

Another topic on "HomeBoy" is the common Pinoy attitude toward physical beauty. "There are people who would enroll their children in less expensive schools just so they could afford plastic surgery," said Boy.

"Personally, I don't try to change myself," Boy shared. "I'm scared of liposuction and surgery. What I do is play badminton almost everyday.

"But you know what? When you look at yourself in the mirror everyday, you somehow get to love yourself for whoever you are. You get to develop other things about yourself because you know you're not in the mold of the regular beauty. But I believe you can transcend this through personality, attitude, and how good you are in what you do."

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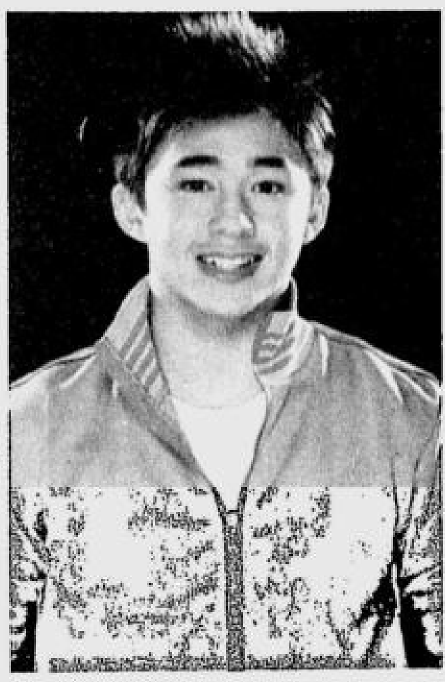
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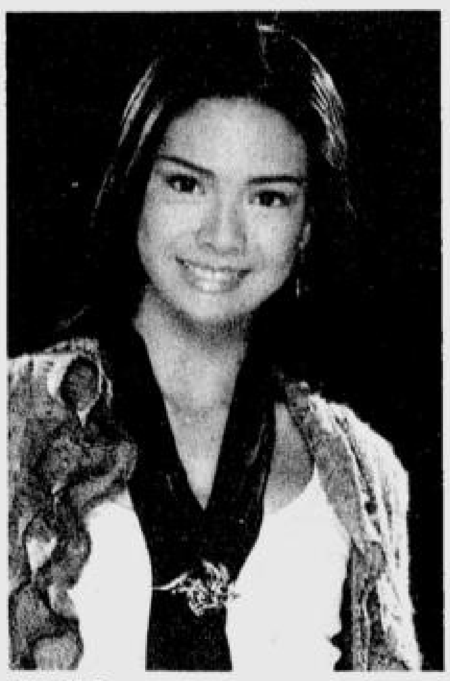
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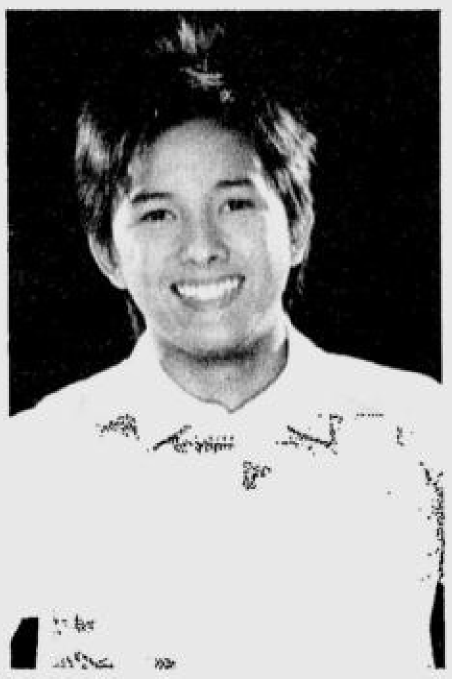
DM Sevilla

And then there's the Power 5

By **Keesa L. Ocampo**, *Contributor*

AFTER more than four months of preparation, grinding and sifting, ABS-CBN's Star Circle National Teen Quest has trimmed its pool of talents from over 15,000 to five.

The last ones standing are Charles Christianson, Paw Diaz, Arron Villaflor, Erich Gancayco and DM Sevilla.

Charles is an avid Robin Padilla fan who unabashedly admits that to play the former "bad boy" of Philippine cinema is his ultimate dream role.

Still, making it to the top 10 of the competition came as a surprise to this 18-year-old who definitely makes Davao proud. Those who have come to know him vouch for his simplicity and being a hard worker.

DM pledged his adoration for Kris Aquino on national television. He wowed the crowd at a karaoke challenge. He boasts of a passion for dancing and singing.

At 17, he has jump-started a career in the industry, building his own fan base from the the start of the show.

When asked about his hidden talent, he said it is cooking. A jack of many trades.

Paw is beauty and brains. But she is more than great looks. She was the valedictorian of her class. She swings from knitting to rappelling and gained the audience's vote with her knack for acting.

Arron, once tagged as the Ya Chang look-alike of the group, has proved that age is not just a number.

Being one of the youngest in the group, 14-year-old Arron has faced several challenges and won the Yakisoba choice award.

His inclination toward celebrity was evident even in his earlier years. "Since I was a kid, I've always wanted to be an *artista*," he says.

Like Charles, Arron looks up to Robin Padilla and would love to perform side-by-side with his idol.

Erich's desire to be an actress is so fiery that every challenge on Star Circle National Teen Quest improved her skill. At the taping of the segment "My Homecoming," Erich shared that she was so surprised to see that her hometown in Davao was so supportive of her.

Still days away from the "Star Circle National Teen Quest" finals, Erich has already been linked to stars like Hero Angeles.

After only four months, "Star Circle National Teen Quest" has made these teens into stars-to-be, and boosted their confidence, passion and talent.

The moment of truth nears as "Star Circle National Teen Quest" Grand Questor's Night happens tomorrow, Saturday, at the Ultra.

The ultimate questor will be awarded P4 million in cash and contracts.

Stars and other celebrities will be present to give the grand questor a star-studded welcome. "Star Circle Quest" batch 1 winners Hero, Sandara Park, Roxanne Guinoo, Melissa Ricks and Joross Gamboa will be present, together with other glittering names in the industry.

ABS-CBN will also feature live point coverages from each questor's hometowns in Davao, Tarlac, Bulacan and Laguna.

THE POWER 5

WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY 10 pm after Big News

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Friday, January 28, 2005

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romance	Get Backers	Ragnarok	Masked Rider Ryuki	TV Patrol	Spirits	Krystala	Lovers In Paris	Hiram	Star Circle National Teen Quest	Star Circle Nat'l Teen Quest Elim Special			Insider	Private I
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		GSIS Member's Hour		Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Mosconi Cup 2004				Ugnayang Pambansa	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA Game-Bol	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Secrets	TNA Impact		Billboard On-Air
GMA 7	Leya (2:45 PM)	Joyride (3:15 PM)	Snow Angel (3:45 PM)		One Piece	Witch Hunter Robin	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin	Starstruck (8:45 PM)	Forever In My Heart (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Just For Laughs	Enterprise		Monk		Dead Zone		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Retro TV		V League				Pulis Na Palaban	IBC News Tonite	GMA The Working President	
Solar		WWE Velocity		Thunder Box		Rastol	Ozzy & Drix	Mucha Lucha!	Avengers	Deep Space Nine		WWE Smackdown				WWE Velocity		Wow	
Nickelodeon	Dora, The Explorer	Little Bear	Blues Clues	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix		100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd				Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Star MYX	Club MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		What I Like About You	JKX	The Today Show		Starting Over		NBC Nightly News	Entertainment Tonight	Will & Grace	What I Like About You	Iron Chef		Star Search		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Blind Date	Fifth Wheel
Cinema One		Matalino Man Ang Matsing				Naging Akin Ka Lamang				D' Uragons			Review Night	Mano-Mano 3				Ticket	
Studio 23								Teen Titans	Justice League	Wazzup Wazzup	Spider-Man: The Animated Series	Mess Match		Playing It Straight		News Central	The Oprah Winfrey Show		Yes Dear
AXN		The Mask of Zorro					Now See This	Samurai X	Samurai X	Beastmaster		The Right Stuff II	Rated X	Cold Squad		Warriors Of Heaven And Earth			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	TNA Wrestling		Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	When Hidden Cameras Attack/ Weird TV	Ultimate Force		Friends	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News		World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic	On Assignment	NG Sea		Weather Gone Mad	Seismic Seconds	The Volcano that Blew the World Away		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wild		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		NG Sea		Weather Gone Mad	Seismic Seconds
Solar Sports		ATP Stockholm Open '04 SF2			Sounds of the Finals	Outdoor Quest		Danish Open '04 Final WD			NBA TV Daily	In This Corner		NBA Game Sacramento @ Sn Antonio					GWS ep.57
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Ming's Quest	Revealed With Jules Asner		New York Nick	Guess Who's Coming To Decorate		Road & Track	Back To Basics	Napoleon	
HBO	The Gathering Storm			Excess Baggage (4.10 PM)				Blood Crime (6.50 PM)			Short Circuit (7.20 PM)			The Tuxedo			Presumed Innocent		
Star Movies			Den Of Lions (3.45 PM)				Hope Ranch (5.40 PM)			Life Or Something Like It				Swimfan			Ravenous (10.25PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	Premiere	Toon Pick	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Zoids: Fuzors	The Looney Tunes Show		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Megas XLR	Aqua Teen (11.15PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh!
Disney Channel	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Lizzie Mcguire	Even Stevens	That's So Raven	Maron Mystery	Totally Spies	The Legend Of Tarzan	Lilo & Stitch/Untalkative Bunny	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			Escape From Atlantis			The Underneath (5.15 PM)				Little Women				Combustion			The People Vs. Larry Flynt		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Cavedweller				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Agency II		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Five Days To Midnight			Child Of Our Time (10.35PM)		Agency II (11.25PM)
Discovery Channel		Power Zone				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Junkyard Wars		Extreme Engineering		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Crime Night	
MTV Philippines		Whatever Things		Non-Stop Hits		Non-Stop Hits		MTV Get Spotted	MTV Loveline	MTV Havana	Non-Stop Hits	MTV Brand New	Be Seen @ MTV	MTV Asia Hitlist		Newlyweds	The Assistant	VH1 Hits/ Video Collection	
Sports Plus	Watson's Champions Challenge Day 4									World Poker Tour ep 3 Aruba				NFL Gameday	Inside the PGA	Golf Int'l.	Bob Hope Chrysler Classic 2nd Round		
EWTN	Does The Church Still Teach That	Angelus (3.15 PM)	Stations Of The Cross	Image Of God	Faith Factory	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Search And Rescue	Your Call	EWTN Gallery	Life on The Rock Encore		Gospel Of Life In Health Care	Defending Life	Daily Mass		Angelus (10.15PM)	Backstage	Father Corapi And The Catechism Of The Catholic Church	

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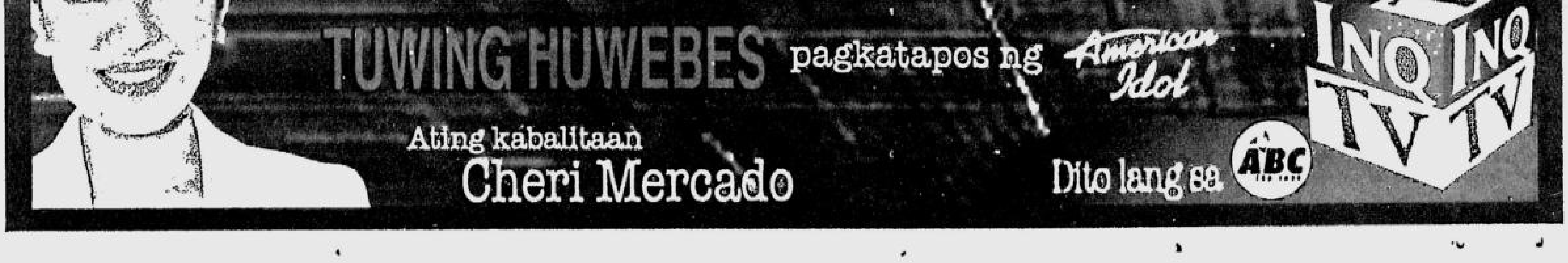
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Surprise, shock, ecstasy for Oscar nominees

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Bolstered by a double shot of espresso, which was much needed at 5 a.m., we ran up the stairs when journalists from leading media around the world were finally allowed to go up the Samuel Goldwyn Theater for the announcement of the nominations for the 77th Academy Awards.

At the foot of the stairs, we said good luck to publicist Deborah Kolar, who also woke up at 3 a.m. hoping her project, the Swedish entry "As It Is In Heaven," would be announced by actor Adrien Brody and Academy president Frank Pierson as one of the nominees for the best foreign language film.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

Brody's breath

Kolar, daughter of the late British actor Robert Shaw ("Jaws," "The Sting" and "A Man for All Seasons," for which he earned Oscar best supporting actor nominations) and one of the nicest persons you'll ever meet in Hollywood, apparently ran too because she found a seat beside me.

While we waited for Brody and Pierson to come out from behind the red velvet curtains, Kolar asked me about the Philippine entry, Mark Meily's "Crying Ladies," starring Sharon Cuneta. We said it was very good.

As Brody, who will be seen next in the thriller "The Jacket," and Pierson strode in, the camera flash bulbs went off like fireworks. Kolar and I stopped chatting and sat in suspense.

Brody, his long bangs artfully arranged on the right side, sprayed breath freshener into his mouth and got laughs from the press inside the theater and, presumably, from the TV viewers. The actor was pretending to get ready to kiss Pierson.

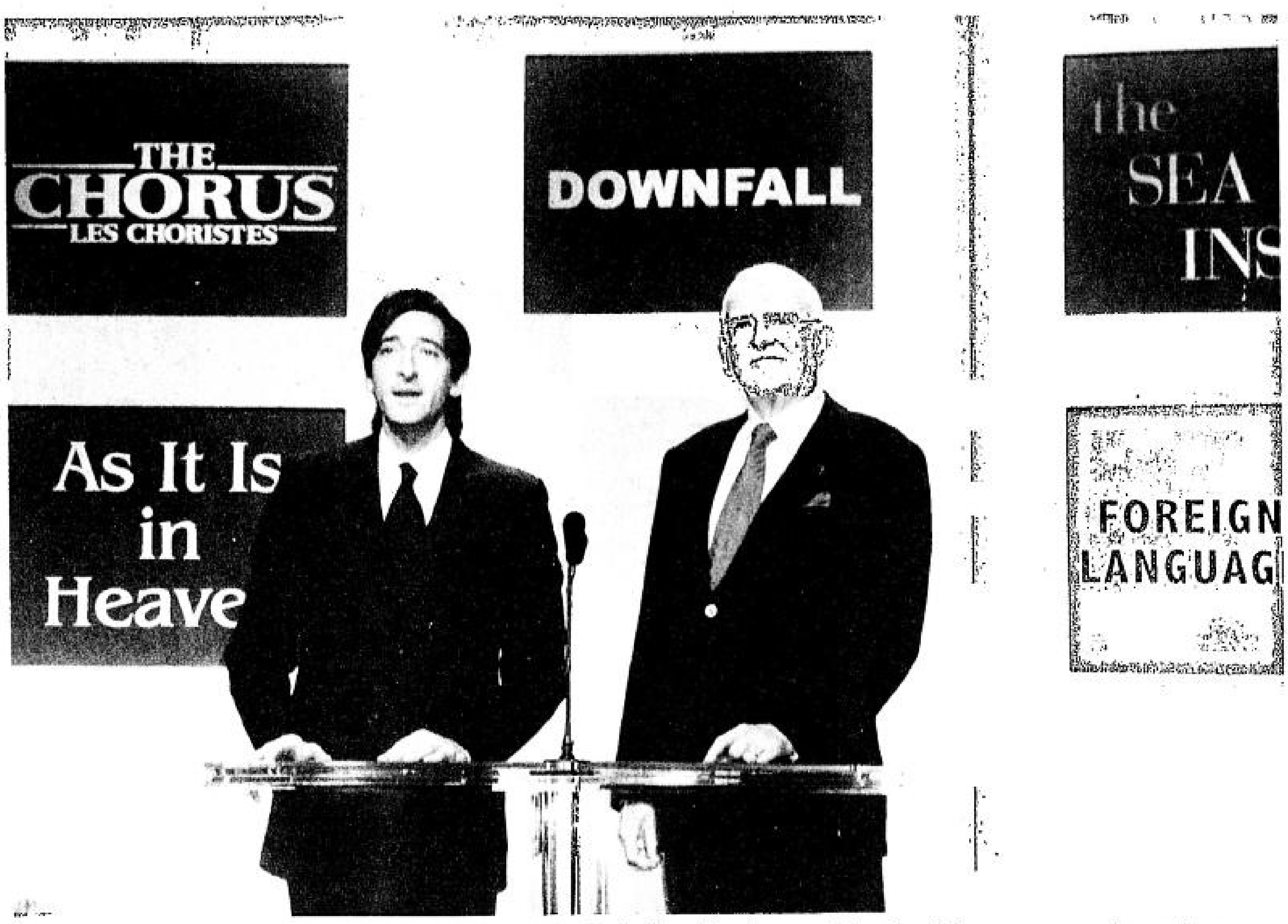
Brody, you may recall, engaged Halle Berry in a passionate kiss before millions of TV viewers after she handed him his Oscar best actor statuette in 2002.

Build-up longer

We whispered good luck to Kolar again. At exactly 5:38 a.m., Brody and Pierson announced the nominees in 10 of the 24 categories. In the frenzy of the moment, amid the continued popping of the flash bulbs, we heard Sweden being mentioned. As in previous Oscar nominations announcements, it was over in a flash, so to speak. As usual, the build-up to the moment was longer than the announcement itself.

We put down our pen and our camera to congratulate a beaming Kolar who was also taking pictures from her disposable camera, which had a few shots left from the other weekend's Golden Globe awards show and parties.

Academy prexy Pierson told INQUIRER Entertainment that with no "Lord of the Rings" behemoth dominating the competition this year, he was glad about the greater diversity of the nominees. Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio's "The Aviator" ran away with 11 nominations but come Feb. 27, when the Oscars are handed out, the other best picture nominees—"Million Dollar Baby," "Sideways," "Ray" and "Finding Neverland"—might hoard the golden statuettes.



THE ANNOUNCEMENT. 2003 Best Actor Adrien Brody ("The Pianist") and Academy president Frank Pierson announce the nominees.
PHOTO BY RUBEN V. NEPALES

Jose Rivera, nominated for best adapted screenplay for "The Motorcycle Diaries," an acclaimed film about the pre-revolutionary years of Che Guevarra (played by Gael Garcia Bernal), was the first to give a reaction statement to the INQUIRER.

"I'm just waking up and I feel fantastic," he exclaimed, making us feel truly awake, instead of a journalist-zombie-pretending-to-be-awake. "This is a great honor for the film."

Winslet ecstatic

Jorge Drexler, cited for best original song from the same film, chimed in: "I am very pleased with this nomination, especially since the song is written in Spanish in a beautiful Spanish-language film that tells a beautiful story."

"I am ecstatic," exclaimed Kate Winslet about her fourth Oscar nomination, thanks to her work in the "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind."

The best actress contender added, "I can't believe it. This nomination means so much to me. To be remembered for a film that was released a while ago, I am honored and completely overwhelmed."

Winslet is grateful to adventurous screenwriter, Charlie Kaufman, who was also the writing genius behind his previously nominated "Adaptation" and "Being John Malkovich." Now, Kaufman shares the best original screenplay nomination for "Eternal" with Michel Gondry and Pierre Bismuth.

"I'm very happy with the nominations Kate Winslet and I received," Kaufman began in his reaction quote. "I'm also very happy with the movie itself and the immensely creative work that Kate, Jim Carrey, Michel Gondry and the rest of the cast and crew did. It was a great privilege to work with all of them on this movie."

Prize on prize

Fresh from their Golden Globe best supporting actor and actress wins, Clive Owen and Natalie Portman of Columbia Pictures' "Closer" are on a roll.

They are back in competition, this time for the Oscars.

Owen stated, "I am extremely honored and proud to be nominated for my role in 'Closer.' It is a testament to the great direction, writing, and work of the entire cast."

Portman paid tribute specifically to her equally good but bypassed co-stars Julia Roberts and Jude Law. She enthused, "I already felt so lucky to have had the best work experience of my career on 'Closer.' To receive this

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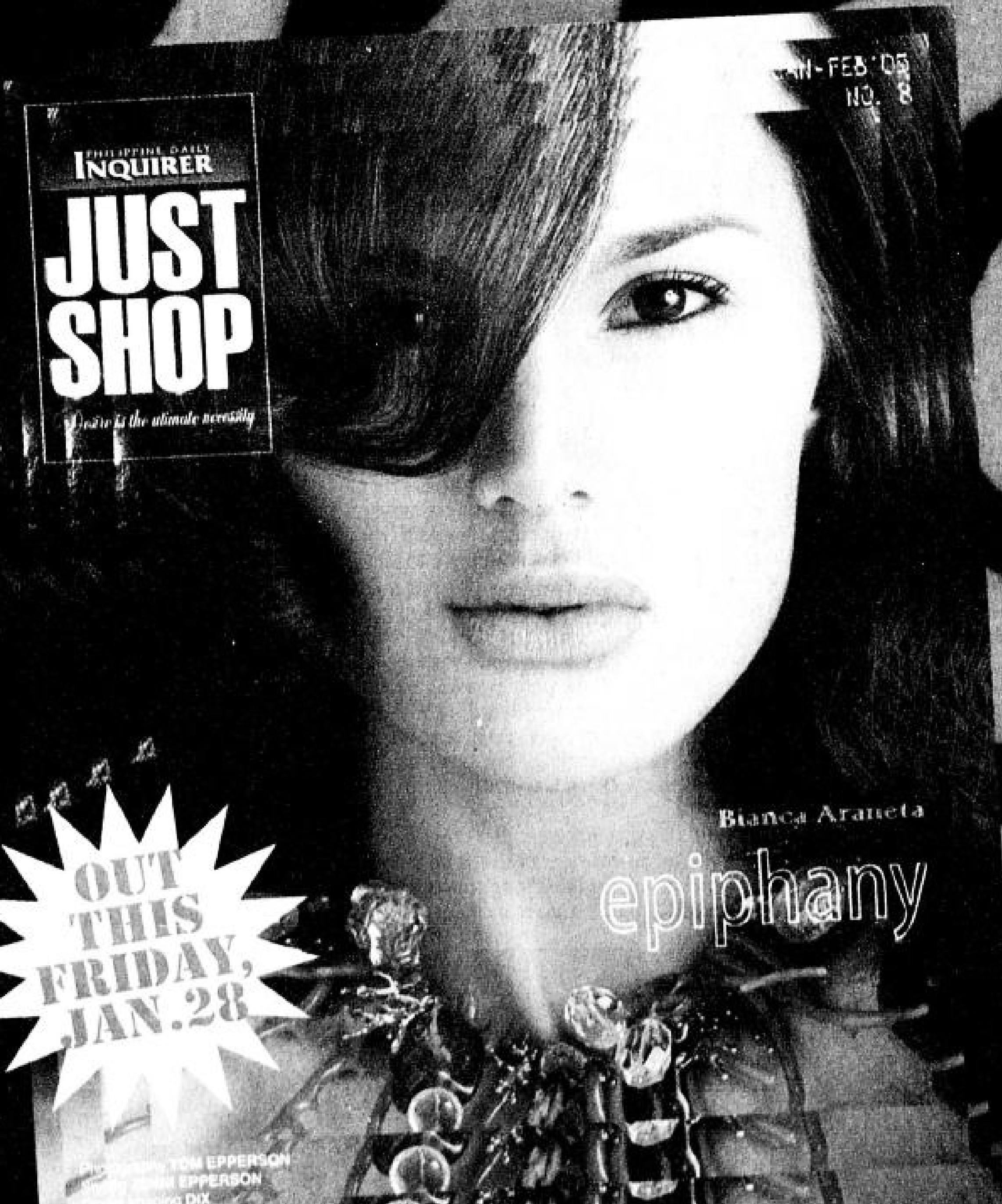

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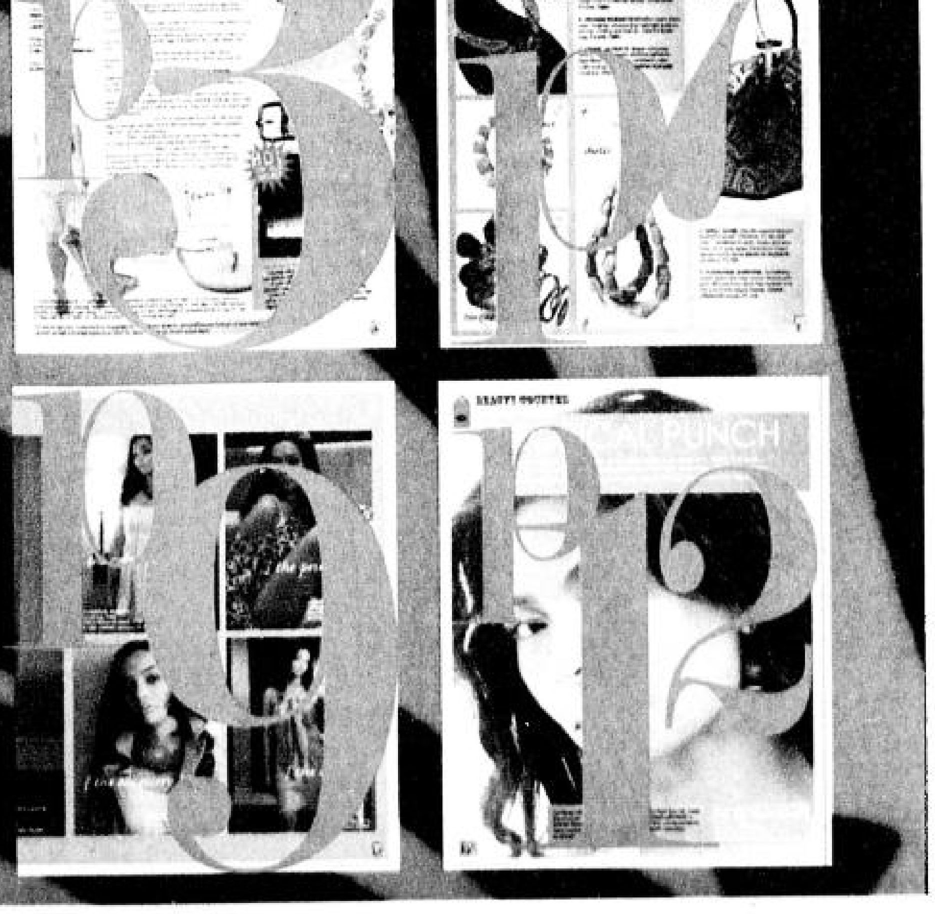

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Surprise, shock, ecstasy...

From page A2-3

kind of recognition is wonderful and feels like a prize on top of a prize.

"It's an honor to have my name listed in the same category with actresses I so admire. Without the incredible work of Jude, Clive and Julia, the words of Patrick Marber and most importantly, the strong and loving guidance of [director] Mike Nichols, I would not be blessed with this honor."

"The Incredibles" was earlier bruited about as a possible best picture contender. It would not have raised an eyebrow if it did: This animated film is that good. Instead, the Disney movie stayed in the best animated feature film, against two DreamWorks productions, "Shark Tale" and "Shrek 2."

Amazing art

Still, director Brad Bird (a.k.a. Edna Mode in the film) was exultant in his reaction: "It is such an honor for 'The Incredibles' to receive four Oscar nominations. I am thrilled that Pixar's creative team is being recognized for their amazing work by the Academy, alongside many other talented nominees.

"The screenplay nomination is particularly gratifying since storytelling is at the heart of what makes Pixar so special and what makes cinema such an amazing art form. I would like to thank the fantastic folks at Disney and Pixar who helped make this happen."

Seven nominations for "Million Dollar Baby" no doubt made Clint Eastwood's day. Not only was he nominated for best director, he is also in the running for best actor honors as a veteran fight trainer.

Paul Giamatti of "Sideways," who was on most critics' best actor of 2004 lists, was surprisingly snubbed. Too bad and too late for Newsweek: In its "Oscar 2005 roundtable" in this week's issue, they included him in an interview with Winslet, Jamie Foxx, Leonardo DiCaprio, Hilary Swank and Annette Bening, who were nominated.

Eastwood's reaction reflected his simple, elegant personality: "I want to thank the Academy for their kind recognition not only on my behalf, but on behalf of this remarkable film. It's always very gratifying to be recognized by your peers and even more so when that recognition is shared by such a wonderful team of creative professionals. This is a very personal film for me and for everyone involved, and we deeply appreciate the Academy's support."

Venerable, magnificent

In contrast, Morgan Freeman was bursting with exhilaration over his shot at a best supporting actor triumph. "It is an honor to be recognized by the Academy for the work that I was privileged to do in this jewel of a film," he said of his fourth Oscar nomination.

"The fact that the venerable Mr. Eastwood and the magnificent Ms Swank have also been nominated makes me so happy that I could just burst," Freeman added.

Golden Globe best actresses Hilary Swank (drama) and Annette Bening (comedy or musical) now square off against each other in the Academy's best actress derby.

Swank paid tribute to her brilliant, low-key director: "It's an honor to have been a part of this film, and to have worked side by side with Clint, Morgan, and all of Clint's wonderful collaborators. It is an experience that I will forever cherish. I'm beside myself."

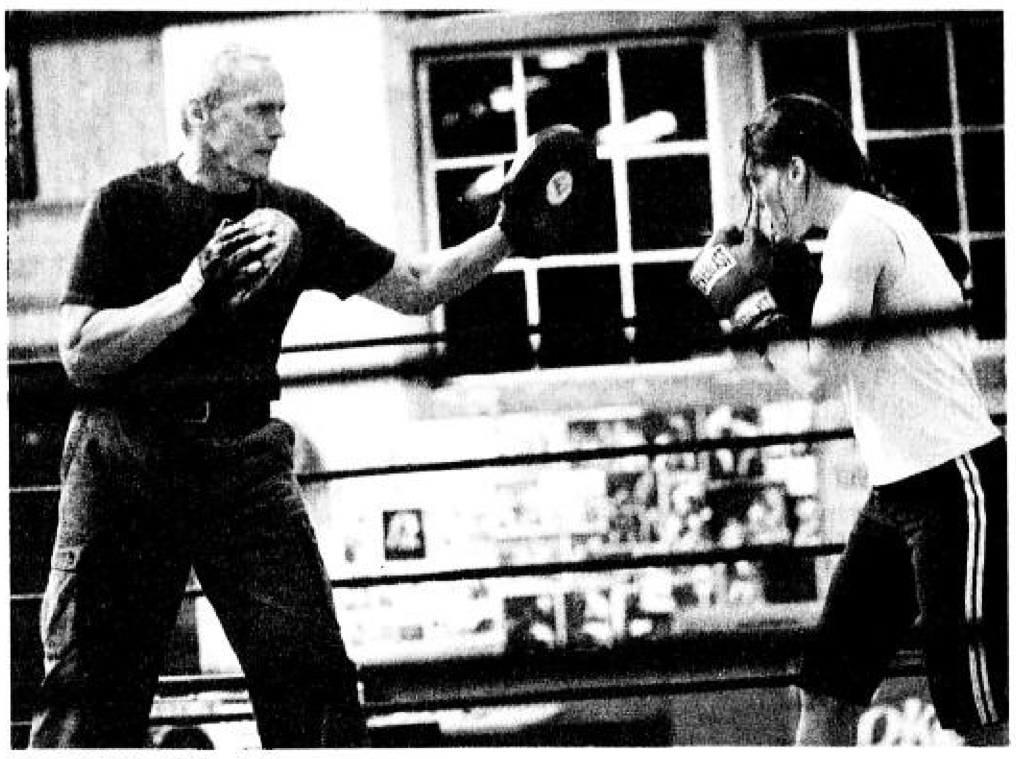
Eastwood faces tough competition from Martin Scorsese, who, believe it or not, has not won a best director title from the Academy. In his fifth try, this time for "The Aviator," Scorsese is a sentimental favorite.

Still, Scorsese, bypassed for previous gems, including "Raging Bull," was generous in his reaction: "Bringing 'The Aviator' to the screen took years of effort by an extraordinary group of individuals, and I am thrilled that so many of the people who poured their heart into the film have been recognized by the Academy. It is a thrill for me to know that the efforts of so many talented members of the cast and crew have been honored with nominations."

Alan Alda's screen time as a corrupt senator in "The Aviator" is short but what he made with his brief part left an impression on the Academy members who gave the veteran actor his first Oscar nomination.

"Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio have brought a powerful movie to the screen," Alda said. "What a joy it's been to work with them and what a shockingly happy experience it is to share in the recognition of the great work of everyone who made this film."

"THE AVIATOR"



"MILLION Dollar Baby"

Andrew Lloyd Webber added an Oscar nomination to his laurels. The musical theater byword earned a best original song nomination with lyricist Charles Hart for "Learn to be Lonely," a pop tune sung by Minnie Driver at the end credits of the movie adaptation of "Phantom of the Opera." As an opera diva in the film, however, Driver lip-synchs to the tracks of another singer trained to belt opera.

Webber said, "I am delighted and proud to receive the nomination for original song, especially for a project that is so dear to me. Charles Hart provided beautiful lyrics and Minnie Driver did a brilliant job bringing the song to life. I also want to congratulate John Mathieson [cinematography], Anthony Pratt and Celia Bobak [art direction] on their well deserved nominations."

Science fiction

France's Christopher Barratier, who directed "The Chorus (Les Choristes)," which competes in the best foreign film sweepstakes, a category in which almost everyone thought that China's gorgeous "House of Flying Daggers" would be a shoo-in, sounded refreshing: "I am particularly happy and grateful for this nomination. When I was writing this story, alone on my desk two years ago, the Oscar ceremony was just science fiction. It's a dream for everyone who wants to be a moviemaker. Those who say the contrary are just big liars."

Kolar, who was calling Sweden to announce the good news when we exited the theater, later told the INQUIRER that Kay Pollak, who directed "As It Is In Heaven," was taking a nap at home when media crew suddenly showed up at his snow-covered house to interview him.

Kolar shared what Pollak, one of Sweden's top filmmakers, told her: "I was asleep when my wife ran into my bedroom to wake me up to tell me that my film was in the Oscar competition. At first, I didn't believe her. I was a bit sleepy but she said it was really true. Since then, my phone has been busy with people who wish to congratulate me."

By coincidence, "Heaven," like "The Chorus," involves a choir. Perhaps Gil Portes started a trend with his "Mga Munting Tinig (Small Voices)," which was the Philippines' Oscar entry in 2002.

When we talked to Vincent Nebrida, one of the executive producers of Unitel's "Crying Ladies," he sounded disappointed and optimistic at the same time. We shared his view that Filipino filmmakers, who are already making news in many international film festivals, will reap Oscar laurels in the immediate future.

Nebrida, who wrote 2002's "American Adobo," told us on the phone from New York, where he is based: "Of course, I was hoping 'Crying Ladies' would make the magic five, given its positive notices from both the New York Times and Los Angeles Times.

"SIDEWAYS"

"FINDING Neverland"

"Besides, we were the final film to screen for the [foreign language film] committee and we were at the Palm Springs Festival which was attended by lots of voters. It also seemed encouraging, as I got calls from Academy voters who requested for copies of the DVD, which just got released. I even heard some buzz that it was among seven films that were competing for the remaining two slots, since everyone knew that 'Les Choristes,' 'The Sea Inside' and 'House of Flying Daggers' were a lock.

"But as it turned out, 'Daggers' didn't even get in. Even if, as some people say, the voters seem to be Eurocentric, I still think our chances keep getting better each year. It's going to be like Groundhog Day, but I believe one day either we'll get it right or the voters finally will."

Ramona Diaz, whose excellently reviewed "Imelda" was in consideration for best documentary feature, sounded sanguine too: "As a former recipient of a student academy award, it was truly an honor to be recognized by the Academy," she told the INQUIRER.

"It was a great ride! Although it was disappointing not to be nominated for 'Imelda,' I must say that it was a tough year to have a documentary out in the market place as the docus were very strong this year. I'm actually in very good company. Many great docus didn't get on the short list, much less get a nomination. However, it's wonderful that they are honoring a film like 'Born into Brothels' which I believe will go all the way.

When we asked Diaz what's next for her, she disclosed, "I'm writing a script. It was an idea that I first pitched to some players in the industry as a documentary and they've encouraged me to write a screenplay based on the characters instead. So I'm doing that. 2004 was a very inspiring year for me because of the success of 'Imelda.' I'm looking forward to the future."

We think that one morning in January in the immediate future, fiercely determined, passionate and talented people like Diaz and Nebrida will be, like what Morgan Freeman felt today, so happy that they could burst, too.

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Great guests on 'Parkinson'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THERE'S a new talk show on "Star World" (Sundays at 9 p.m.) that you should look into, because it fields such great guests.

"Parkinson" is hosted by veteran British radio-TV interviewer **Michael Parkinson.**

When we viewed the show last Sunday, its genial host shot the breeze with the stellar likes of **Denzel Washington, Naomi Campbell** and **Simon Cowell,** and **Ronan Keating** sang a song. What an outstanding guest list!

We also appreciated the program's astute mix of guests, which made for a breezily varied evening. And Parkinson got high hosting marks from us because he didn't try to upstage his guests, but still managed to ask some tough questions that needed asking.

Parkinson got Washington to admit that he'd been a troubled and even wild youth. But the black superstar balked at confirming the host's depiction of him as an alcoholic when he was in his teens.

Campbell admitted that she had been a drug addict, but hoped that her successful rehab therapy could motivate other people addicted to substance abuse to similarly seek help.

She also explained why the British press seemed to be so "down" on her—because there were aspects to her life that she insisted on keeping private, and the tabloids would have none of that. So, to teach her a painful lesson, they invented lurid fantasies "starring" her, and she simply had to roll with the punches.

Of course, when Simon Cowell's portion came, the tables were effectively turned, because Cowell is often more the victimizer than the victim, due to the painful comments he inflicts on "American Idol" contestants.

On "Parkinson," however, Cowell strove hard to disabuse viewers of the notion that he was a vile, evil man. Inveterate honesty was more his style, he said—but try telling that to all of those young singers whom he's wounded to the quick with his cutting remarks!

Was Cowell nasty even as a child, Parkinson wanted to know? Yes, the "professionally snide" guest admitted, and gamely shared a recollection in this regard.

When Cowell was only 3 years old, his mother bought a fur hat and modeled it for him. How did she look, she wanted to know? "Like a poodle!," the precociously bitchy boy sniffed.

Practice does make perfect, but that anecdote indicates that Cowell already had a lot going for him in the bitch department, even at that early age!

In the show's final portion, all three guests interacted with each other, but their interaction didn't catch fire. But the show had already scored enough points with their separate interviews to end up as a viewing treat.

As for Ronan Keating's song number, it was the musical icing on an already talk-delicious cake!

New shows on ABS-CBN

AMONG the new shows to be launched soon on ABS-CBN are:

"HomeBoy," a weekday morning show hosted by Boy Abunda.

GREAT/ A2-6

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3 (DTS) ONE MISSED CALL
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G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 WHITE NOISE
2 ELEKTRA
3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 ELEKTRA
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 ELEKTRA 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
4 OCEAN'S 12
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE
6 MEET THE FOCKERS
7 WHITE NOISE

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 MEET THE FOCKERS 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40
2 ELEKTRA 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45

GB3 GREENBELT 3
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 MEET THE FOCKERS 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 ELEKTRA 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 ELEKTRA 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15
GUARANTEED SEATS 4 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30
GUARANTEED SEATS 5 OCEAN'S 12 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30

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2 MEET THE FOCKERS
3 SUPER BABIES: BABY GENIUSES 2
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE
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Cotabato cable TV provider switched off for showing porn

By Charlie C. Senase
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—Mayor Muslimin Sema has ordered the closure of a local cable TV provider here for allegedly showing pornographic films on its community channel.

The management of the Maguindanao Sky Cable claimed that the directive was "drastic and without jurisdiction."

The Jan. 15 order was addressed to the firm's manager, Helen Rabago.

In his letter to Rabago, Sema said his office conducted an investigation following the complaints of three residents, and found that MSC's Channel 22 was "showing pornographic films that… weaken the moral fiber of the community."

It said "the exhibition of these viewing materials [was not accompanied by] any written approval and permission from the Video Regulatory Board."

Complainants fictitious?

This shows that the station violated standing local ordinances, Sema stressed. The letter concluded: "The establishment [must therefore] cease and desist from… operation immediately."

One of the company's major stockholders, Estrellita Juliano, strongly denied the grounds of the shutdown order. She argued that the supposed complainants were not even in MSC's list of subscribers.

"We checked their addresses but couldn't find them," said Juliano, surmising that the complaints were "fictitious."

Juliano, Sema's rival in the 2004 polls, pointed out that "the local government has no jurisdiction over broadcast and cable TV companies."

"It's the National Telecommunications Commission that regulates us," she said. "On the other hand, broadcast stations are under KBP

COTABATO/ A2-7

Great guests on...

From page A2-5

"Search for Star in A Million," Fridays at 9:30 p.m., hosted by **Sarah Geronimo, Christian Bautista, Erik Santos** and **Mark Bautista**, singing champions in their own right.

"Star Dance," the Kapamilya network's Search for a Star Dancer, is seen Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. Hosts are **Marvin Agustin, Bianca Gonzalez** and **Archie Alemania.**

"MRS" (Most Requested Show) is a daily variety show to be hosted by **Roderick Paulate** and **Amy Perez.**

"Astig" is a gag show airing weekdays at 2:15 p.m., with **Ai Ai de las Alas, Bayani Agbayani, Tuesday Vargas** and **Candy Pangilinan.**

'Bee Gees Number Ones'

THE BEE GEES have sold more than 100 records since the '60s. A new collection of their greatest hits, titled "Bee Gees Number Ones," has just been released. The 19-track compilation includes popular anthems like "Massachusetts," "Words," "You Win Again," "Night Fever," "Staying Alive" and "Tragedy."

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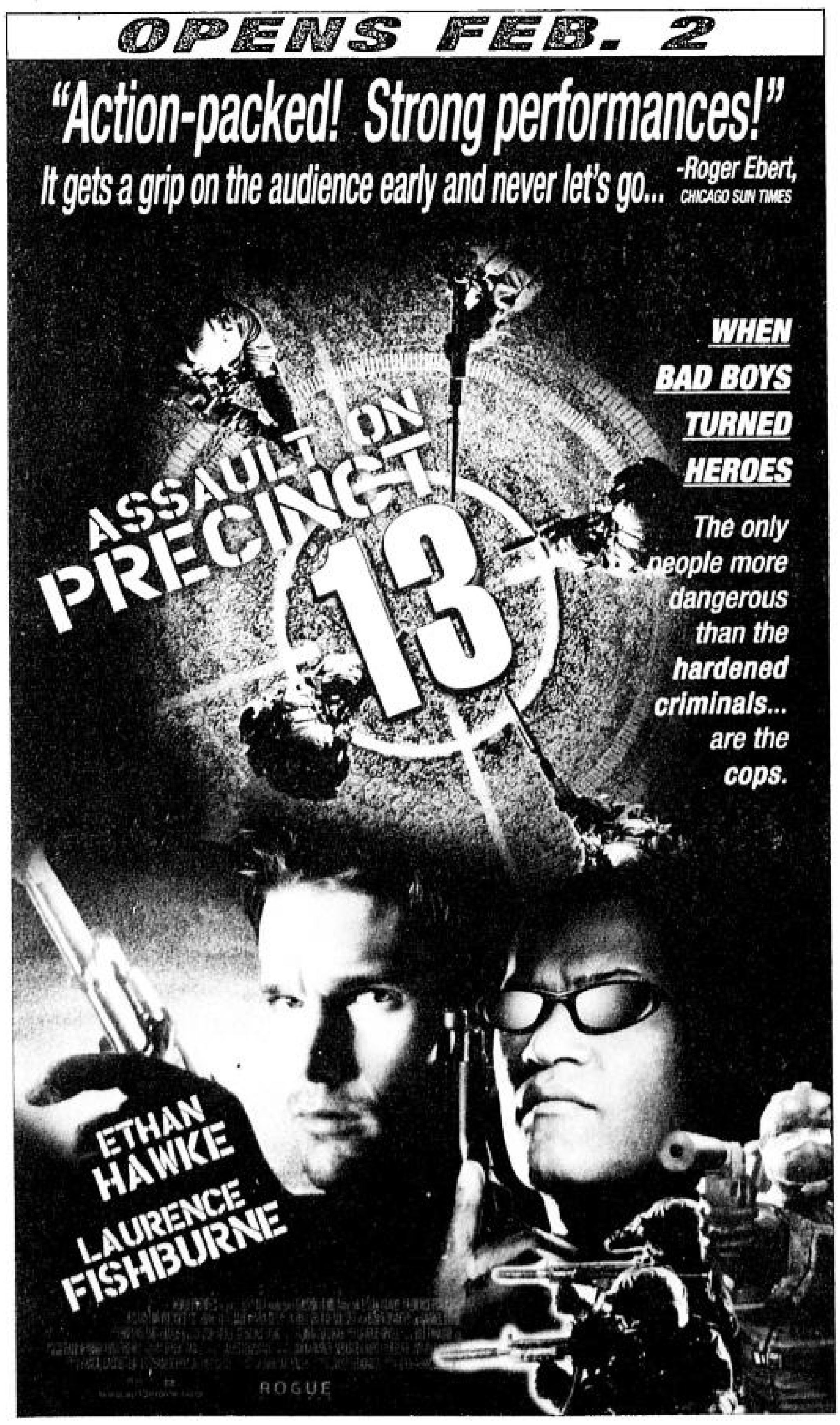
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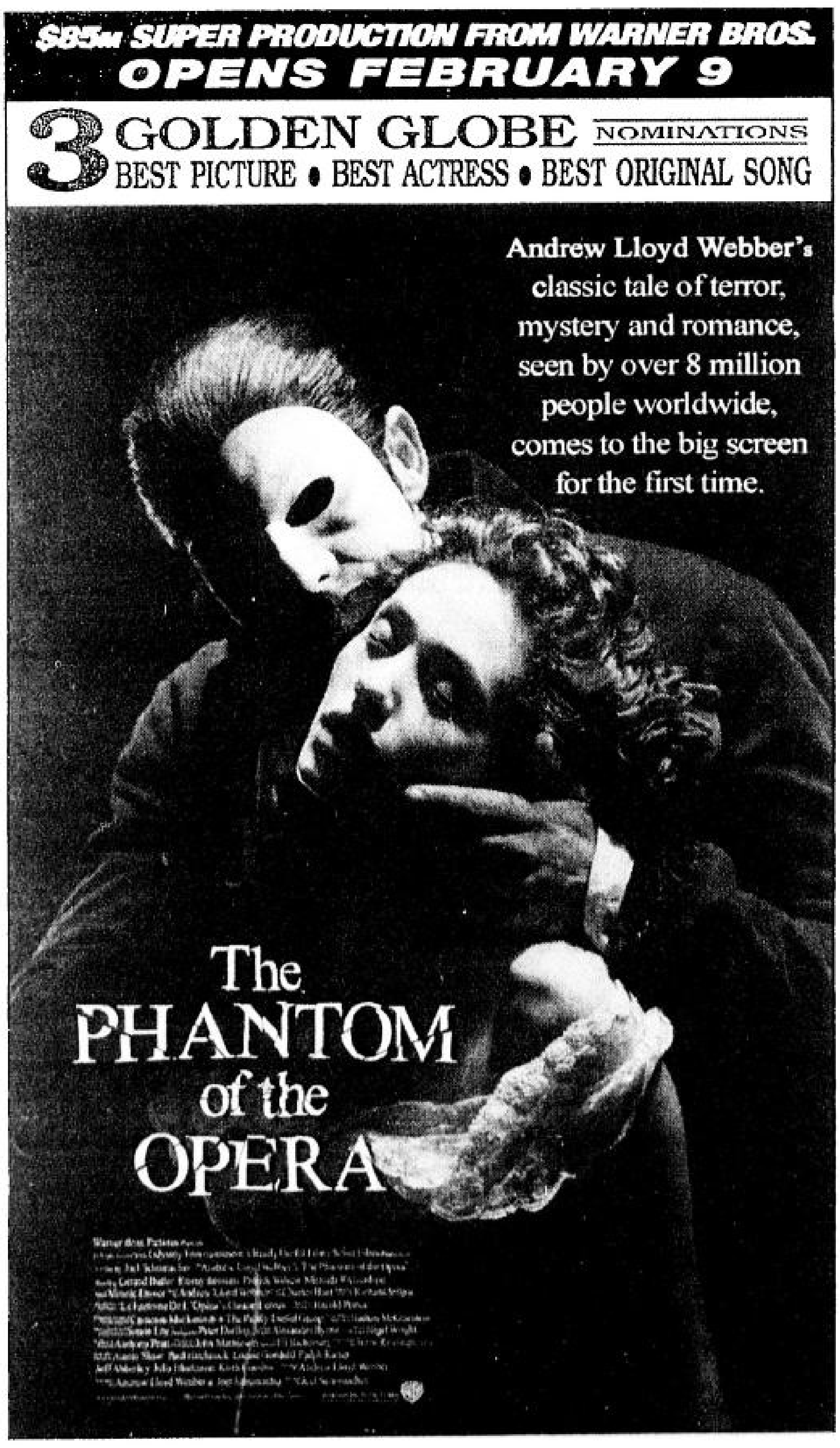
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I don't sell shabu anymore, says Hotbabe's ex-starlet mom

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CALAMBA CITY—Former starlet Rowena Bejasa, 42, mother of sexy star and Viva Hotbabes member JC Parker, denied police accusations that she pushed illegal drugs.

Bejasa, known in the early 1990s by her screen name Rowena Ruiz, was arrested Thursday night in a buy-bust in her house in St. John Subdivision, Barangay Uno.

Senior Insp. Conrado Masongsong, chief investigator, said members of the city police anti-illegal drugs arrested Bejasa as she handed three packs of shabu (methampethamine hydrochloride) worth P9,000 to someone who posed as a buyer.

In an interview with the INQUIRER in the cramped city jail, Bejasa blamed Supt. Edmund Zaide, city police chief, for her arrest. She claimed Zaide was courting her, and that he threatened to arrest her after she spurned him.

Zaide quickly retorted: "It's the drugs. She's gone crazy. Why would I do that? I'm a happily married man. I don't even know her."

Bejasa's denial of the charges was expected, he said. "No one would own up to this. But almost every drug addict and pusher we earlier arrested identified her as a source of shabu."

Bejasa admitted she used to be a drug dependent. She said she took shabu "out of curiosity" in 1998, but she stopped a year later.

"I also used to sell shabu, but I soon realized it was not doing me any good. Besides, my children were growing up," she said.

She insisted that she tested negative in the drug test following her arrest.

No transaction transpired between her and the poseur-buyer, Rowena also insisted.

"It was an illegal operation," she said. "They couldn't produce a search warrant."

She claimed that she lost several personal belongings, including a cellular phone, during the search.

Masongsong supported his superior's claim. "We've been watching her for a long time now but she has [consistently] eluded us," he said.

Family knots

Neighbors informed the police that Parker frequently visited Bejasa's house. But the sexy star has yet to see her mother in jail, Masongsong said.

Bejasa tested positive for drug use in a test administered on Friday, the police officer added. In fact, he said, "She is a long-time drug dependent."

Zaide said Thursday's buy-bust was the result of a monthlong surveillance. Bejasa was among the top drug pushers in the province, he explained.

He said Bejasa's 67-year-old father, Romy, was also jailed for possession of shabu on Dec. 8. The elder Bejasa was released after posting bail.

Rowena confirmed her father's arrest, but said the shabu police found on him belonged to her younger brother, Ronnie, "the black sheep in the family."

Ronnie was the pusher, she said. "My father is innocent. Ronnie is in rehab. He vowed to stop doing drugs after our father was jailed."

She said her daughter Parker, 19, was in Dubai for a series of Hotbabes show. "She will be back on Saturday," Bejasa volunteered. "But she sent me money. She also asked her friends from the media to see me.

"I hope she doesn't get dragged into this," Bejasa said. "She has been working so hard ... it would be such a pity."

Cotabato...

From page A2-7

(Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas)."

No connection

Juliano said Channel 22 did show films with lovemaking scenes, but maintained that these were not pornographic.

The mayor's office should have forwarded the alleged complaints to the proper agencies, Juliano said, like the Video Regulatory Board, Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, or the NTC.

In a radio interview on Wednesday, Sema clarified that his order had nothing to do with Juliano's pending election protest case against him. Juliano is seeking the annulment of Sema's proclamation as mayor, due to reported fraud.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos earlier spoke on radio station DXMS, saying the commission's en banc decision on Juliano's protest was forthcoming.

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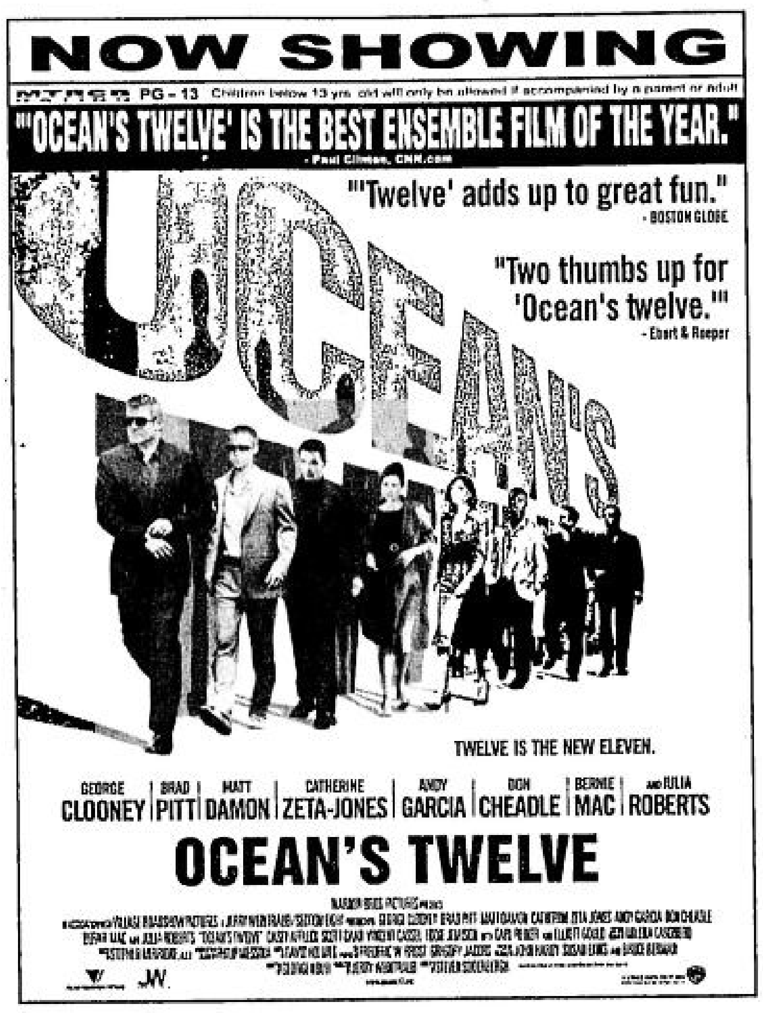
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IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
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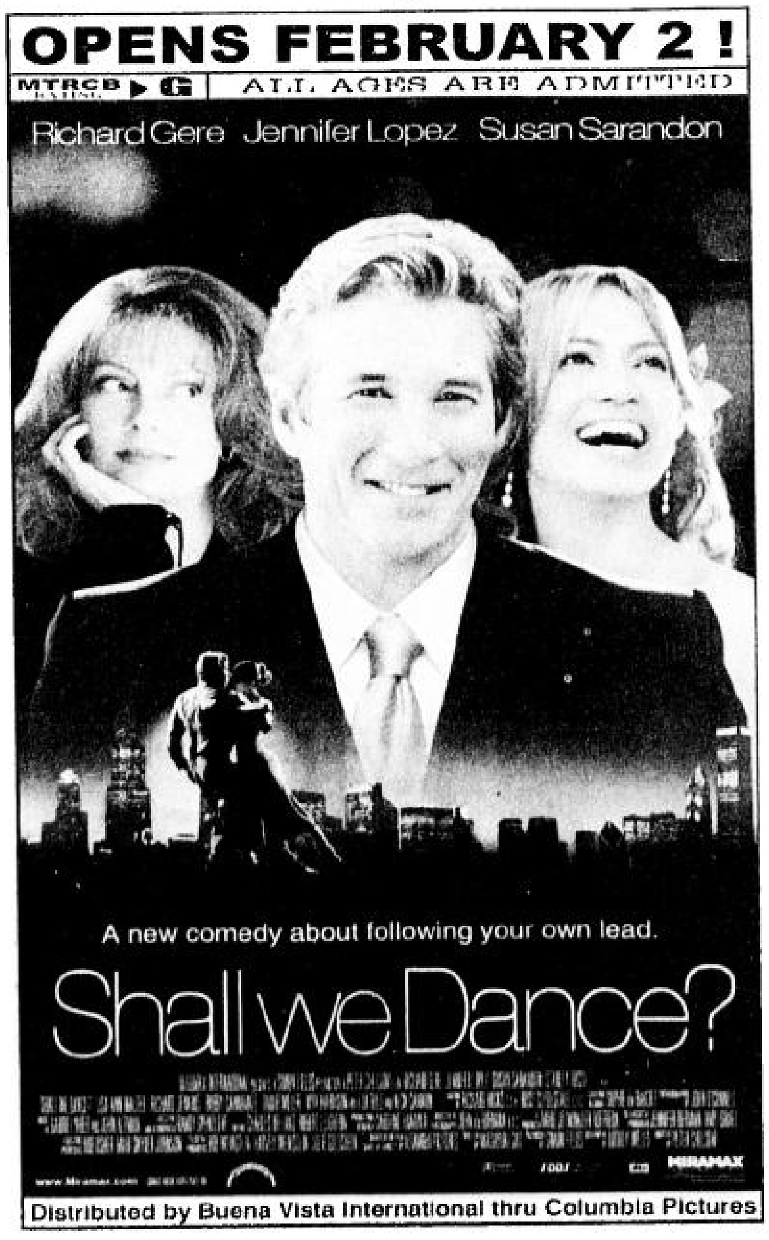
OPENS FEBRUARY 2 !
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ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
Richard Gere Jennifer Lopez Susan Sarandon
A new comedy about following your own lead.
Shall we Dance?
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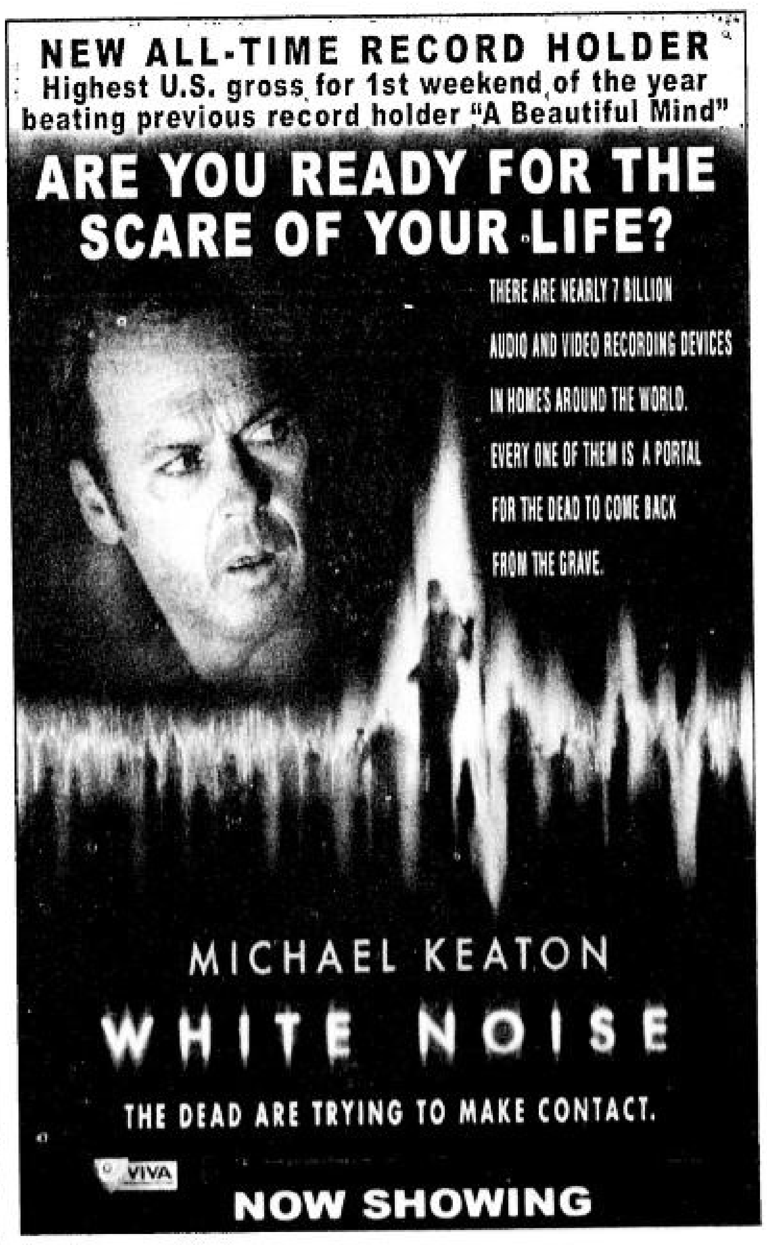
NEW ALL-TIME RECORD HOLDER
Highest U.S. gross for 1st weekend of the year beating previous record holder "A Beautiful Mind"
ARE YOU READY FOR THE SCARE OF YOUR LIFE?
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MICHAEL KEATON
WHITE NOISE
THE DEAD ARE TRYING TO MAKE CONTACT.
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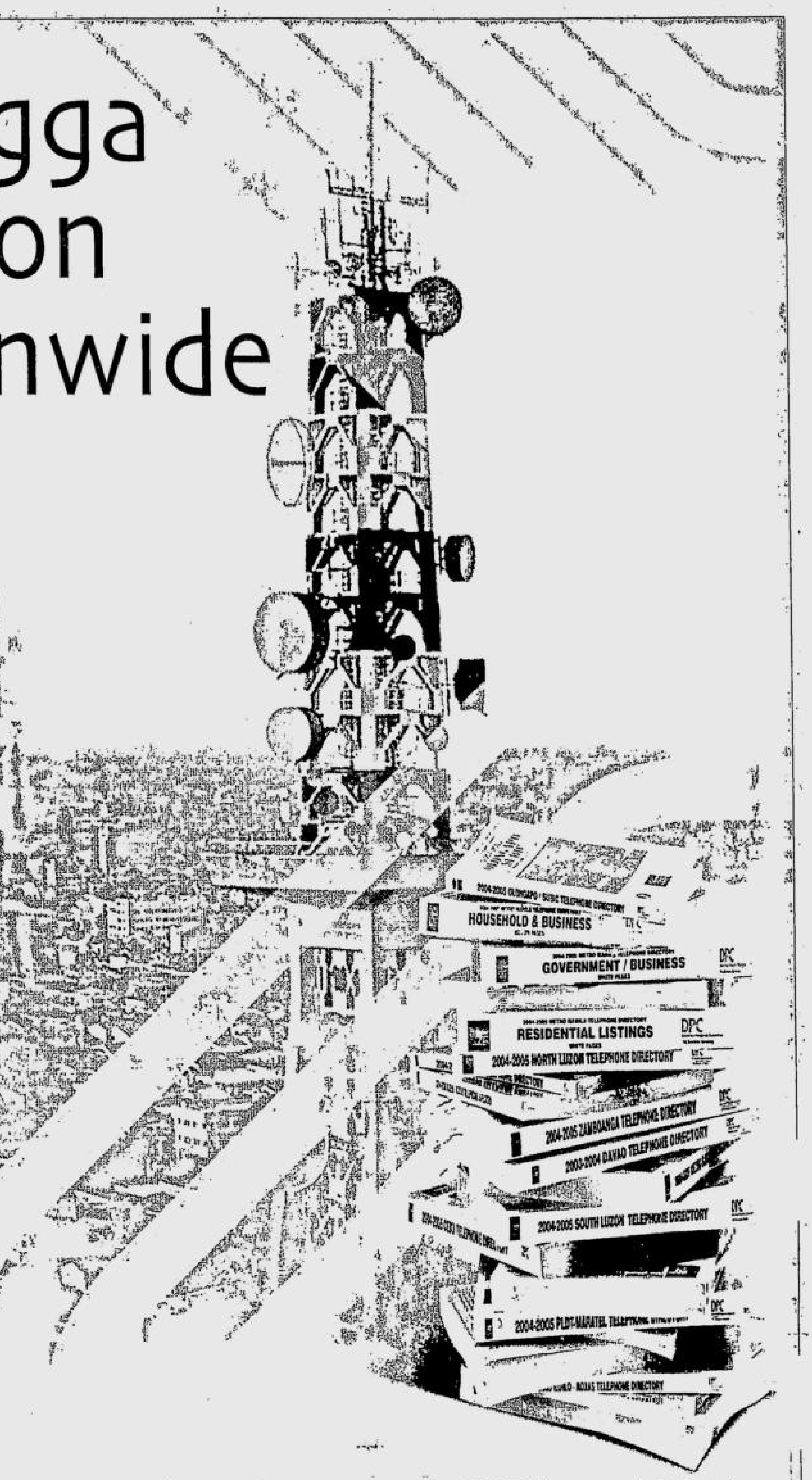
NOW SHOWING

Bonggang Bongga ang Bagong Taon ng PLDT Nationwide

BAGONG TAON
BONGGANG TAON
January 5 is National Telebabad Day
JANUARY 5-9
NAKAKALOKANG
SALE!


HOUSEHOLD & BUSINESS
GOVERNMENT / BUSINESS
RESIDENTIAL LISTINGS
2004-2005 NORTH LUZON TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 ZAMBOANGA TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2003-2004 DAVAO TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 SOUTH LUZON TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 PLDT-MARATEL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
DPC

The year 2005 started in a grand way for PLDT, the country's leading telecommunications provider, when it ushered the New Year with its Bagong Taon Bonggang Taon campaign. From January 5 to 9, PLDT showered its existing and would-be clients with fabulous treats, exciting freebies and unbelievable discounts.

The PLDT Home Rewards Caravan lands in Makati amidst a huge crowd.

The five-day blitz began with a nationwide celebration of "Telebabad To Death Day" on the 5th. For one whole day, hundreds of thousands of PLDT subscribers were able to connect with their distant friends, relatives and loved ones that are using PLDT landlines or SMART or Talk N' Text cell phones for the low flat rate of only 50 Pesos.

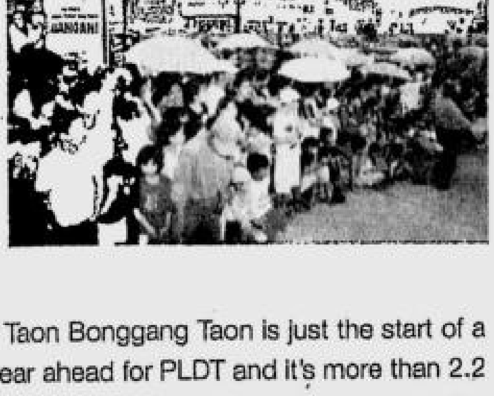
PLDT also treated its new clients with huge discounts on products and services with its "Nakakalokang Sale." Colorful booths in malls, commercial outlets and other locations all over the Philippines offered new PLDT landline subscribers free installation, up to 2 months free landline use and up to 50-percent discount on service fees to myDSL, PLDT's ultra-fast, broadband Internet service.

Several home rewards caravans also rolled out to scores of barangays in Cebu, Iloilo, Bacolod, Batangas, Cavite and Metro Manila with "Sugod Barangay, Hatid Regalo." Spearheaded by PLDT's trademark yellow service vehicles and floats with celebrities on board, these caravans distributed free premium items and gifts and offered a variety of home appliances at huge discounts.

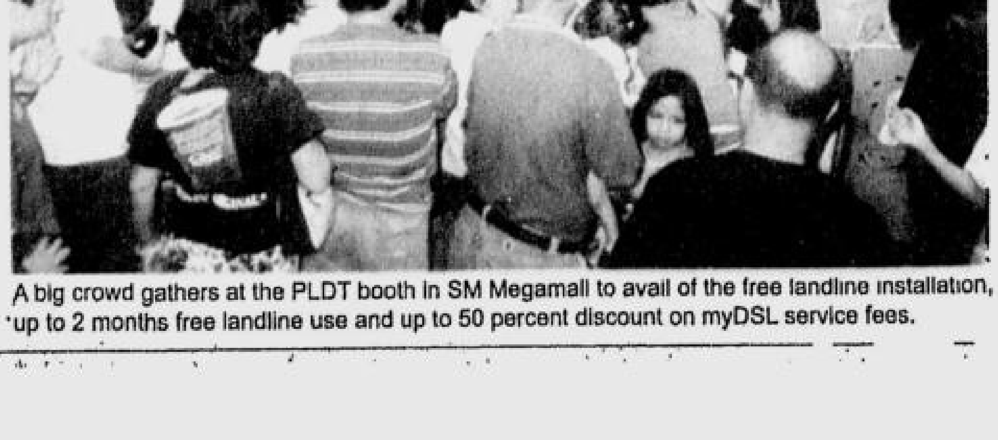
More than ever before, 2005 will see PLDT delivering yet more unequalled and real value to Filipino consumers on a massive scale as it continues its unwavering commitment of providing fast and efficient service to the Philippine society.

A large Cebuano crowd welcomes PLDT's Home Rewards Caravan

The Sexbomb Girls, garbed in yellow PLDT t-shirts, lead the Home Rewards Caravan.



A large crowd waits for the Home Rewards Caravan in Cavite.



A big crowd gathers at the PLDT booth in SM Megamall to avail of the free landline installation, up to 2 months free landline use and up to 50 percent discount on myDSL service fees.

A PLDT subscriber from Makati gets a gift from Sexbomb Cynthia.

PLDT

Bagong Taon Bonggang Taon is just the start of a wonderful year ahead for PLDT and it's more than 2.2 million subscribers all over the country. Talagang iba pa rin ang may PLDT landline. Sangkatutak na saya na may kasunod pa!

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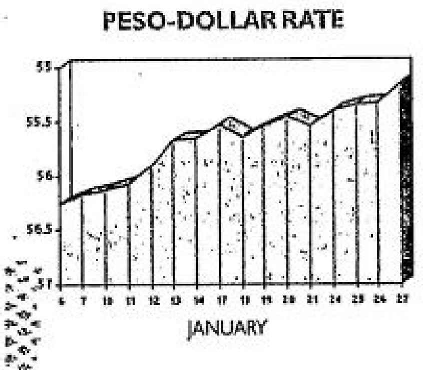


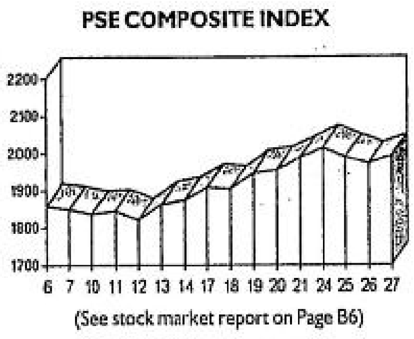
₱ 55.15 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 27, 2005

¥ 103.24 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 27, 2005

GOLD: $ 427.50-428.00
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 27, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Market cheers successful bond sale



(See stock market report on Page B6)

SHARES finished higher yesterday, boosted by the positive reception given the country's latest global bond offering.

Swift progress in Congress of fiscal reforms, coupled with other favorable economic and corporate indicators, gave investors more reasons to take up positions in the market, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 21.11 points, or 1.1 percent, at 1,991.39, after giving up 2.2 percent over the past two sessions, including a 1- percent loss Wednesday.

All sectoral indicators closed higher. Gainers led decliners 78 to 29, while 43 stocks were unchanged.

The total volume of shares traded was 5.72 billion shares valued at P1.19 billion, compared to Wednesday's 5.63 billion shares worth P1.69 billion .

The government raised $1.5 billion on overseas capital markets Wednesday amid healthy demand. It had originally aimed at $1 billion.

The bond issue was favorably received despite the country's credit rating downgrade by Standard & Poor's last week. **AP**

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ARROYO administration's modified revenue-raising measures will generate for the national coffers P140 billion in additional revenue a year, estimates of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council or Ledac showed.

The amount is more than the P80 billion in incremental revenue originally projected by the administration. The increase in the target was brought about by the various modifications made on the proposed measures.

These measures, if approved, will enable the government to accelerate the attainment of its medium-term goal of achieving a zero-deficit or balanced budget position.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier said her government needed P80 billion in incremental revenue a year to wipe out the deficit, which last year stood at P186.1 billion, by 2010. With the modified measures, according to the Department of Finance, this goal can be achieved by 2008.

In a meeting the other day, the Ledac—composed of top officials of both the executive and legislative branches of the government—came up with the new estimates after considering all the modifications in the proposals. The estimates were presented by Secretary Gabriel Claudio.

The Ledac agreed that the immediate implementation of these measures was necessary to prevent further deterioration of the country's financial position.

The Congress earlier said the passage of the sin taxes law, which raises the excise tax on cigarettes and alcohol, would result in an additional revenue of P15 billion. The amount was higher than the previous target of only around P7 billion.

The Ledac said the government could also raise P10 billion from the Attrition Act of 2005, P16 billion from the tax amnesty bill, P35 billion from the proposed increase in value-added tax rate from 10 to 12 percent, P28 billion

FISCAL/ B6

A SHOEMAKER, unaware of how the recent passage of a bill raising value-added tax from 10 percent to 12 percent will affect him, does his daily routine in a shoe factory in Manila. President Macapagal-Arroyo, however, assures the public that safety nets are in place to shield the most marginal sectors from the impact of the increase. REUTERS

BSP expects inflation to drop by end of Q1

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INFLATION rate is expected to decline by the end of the first quarter but will still average higher this year at 6.4-6.5 percent than the 6 percent in 2004, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said.

In a briefing on inflation, BSP Managing Director for research Diwa Guinigundo said: "Inflation should decline to below 5 percent by the end of 2005."

The BSP updates its own projection and outlook on inflation every quarter. All its projections and the government's revised target use the updated 2000-based consumer price index.

Based on the latest numbers, he said the government's revised inflation target range of 5-6 percent for the year would be exceeded.

The new target range of 5-6 percent, up from the previous target of 4-5 percent, will be kept as a "fighting target." Guinigundo said that with appropriate non-monetary intervention measures, there was a possibility that inflation would ease faster than the BSP's own projection and eventually fall within the target.

For January, the BSP expects inflation to hit 7.8-7.9 percent.

For 2006, the new target was set by the government at 4-5 percent.

The BSP's latest projection uses a foreign exchange assumption range of P55-57 to $1. The recent sharp appreciation of the peso, however, is not seen to significantly affect the inflation projections.

The BSP is expecting the following to put pressure on inflation: the continued uncertainty in the world oil prices despite the recent easing in the global market, the possible uptick in food prices due to the El Niño dryspell and possible foreign exchange pressures.

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ICTSI unit bags project in Japan

By Clarissa S. Batino

A UNIT of International Container Terminal Services Inc. has signed a contract with the Naha Port Authority for the operation of a container terminal in Okinawa, Japan starting January next year.

Naha International Container Terminal Inc., which will operate the terminal in Okinawa, is 60 percent owned by ICTSI and 40 percent by six stevedoring companies operating in the Naha Port such as Kaiho Koun Co. Ltd., Okinawa Koun Co. Ltd., Sangyo Koun Co. Ltd., Daichi Koun Co. Ltd., OTK Co. Ltd. and Daikyo Koun Co. Ltd.

The Naha project is the latest addition to ICTSI's portfolio of overseas port operations. The company, controlled by the Razon family, operates the Suape Container Terminal in Brazil and the Baltic Container Terminal in Poland.

In the Philippines, ICTSI's flagship venture is the Manila International Container Terminal. It also operates the NSD Terminal in Subic Bay Freeport, Zambales; Bauan Terminal in Batangas, and the Makar Wharf in Gen. Santos City in southern Philippines.

A 10-year lease agreement would be signed by the ICTSI unit and the Naha Port Authority following the issuance of the authority to operate by the Office of the Japanese Prime Minister.

"We realize that very few public ports in Japan have been allowed for private operations on a long-term basis, and ICTSI, a foreign company, has been given this rare privilege," Enrique Razon Jr., ICTSI chair and president, said in a statement.

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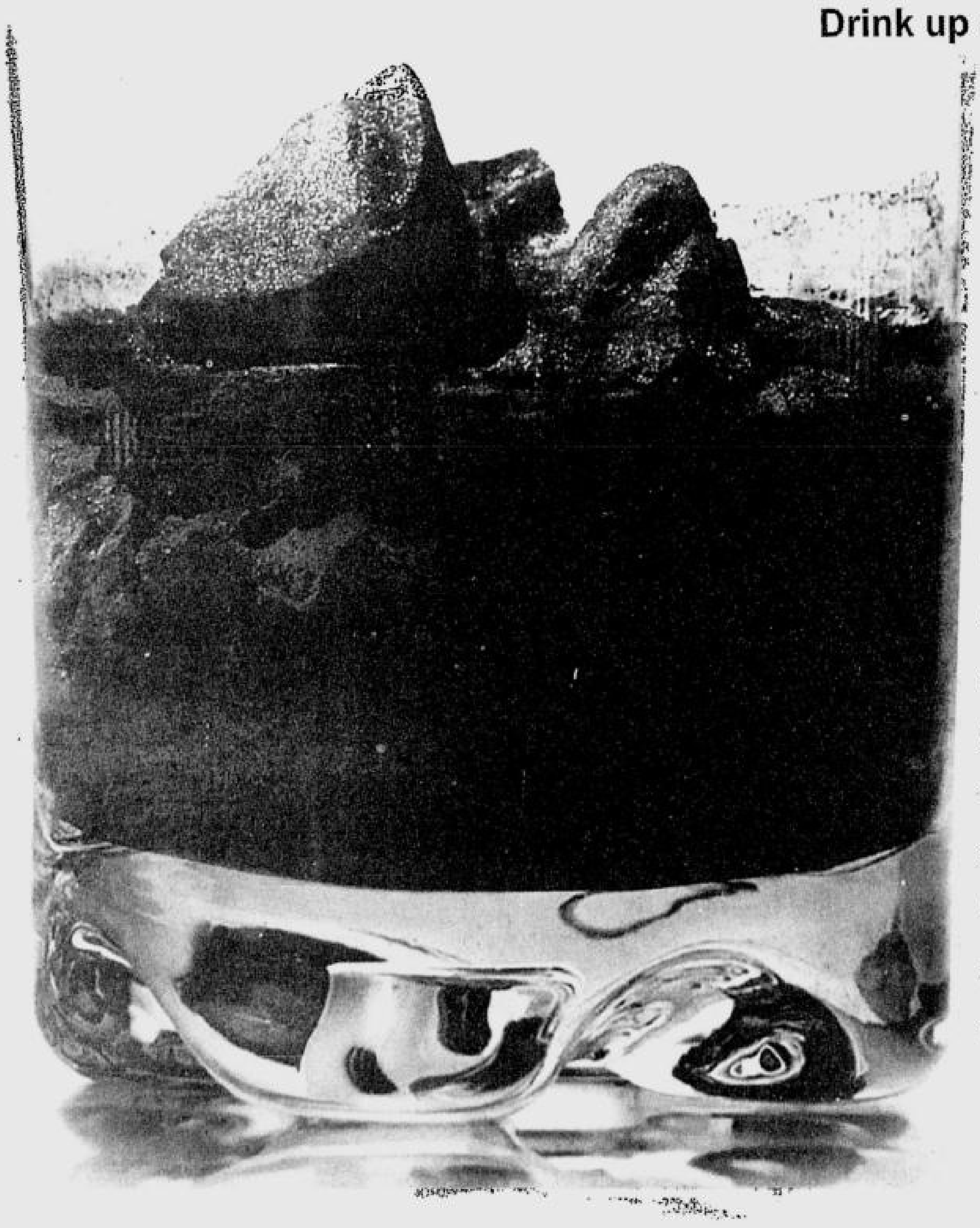
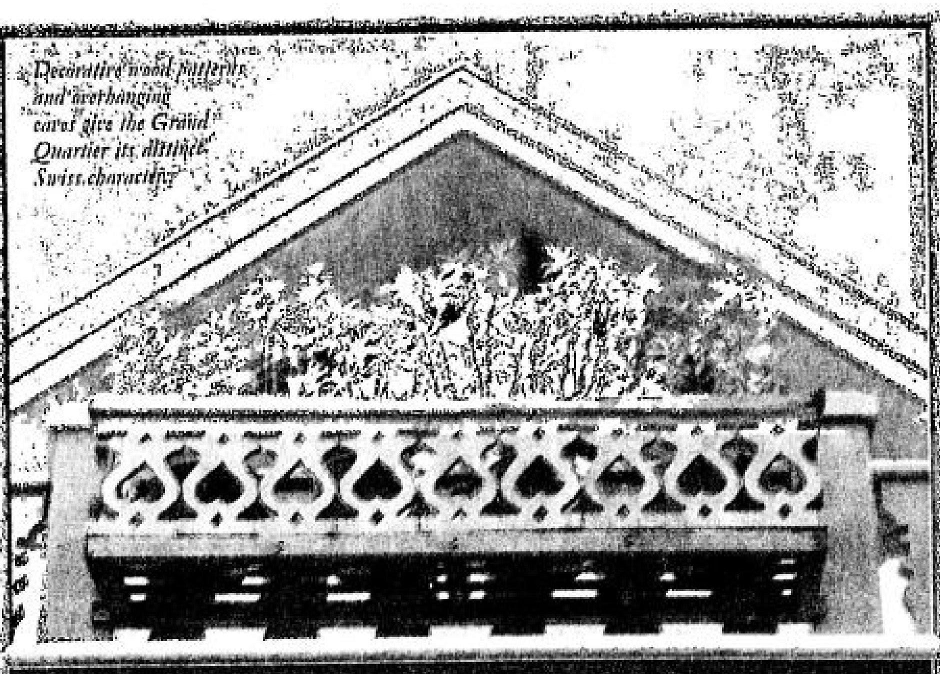


Drink up or speak up. Our continued reliance on imported fossil fuels like coal and oil for energy is one of the largest reasons behind problems like global warming, air pollution, the rise in respiratory ailments, and the worsening condition of our water supplies. This dependence also leaves us economically vulnerable to the spiralling cost of coal and oil in the world market. And things will only get murkier unless we reduce our use of coal and oil and push for the increased use of renewable energy sources like geothermal, wind, biomass, hydro, and solar. Speak up and let the government know you want clean energy. Text WWF YES <Your Name> to 2366 for Globe (P2.50/text) or log on to www.powerswitch.org.ph/vote. Act now and help get the Renewable Energy Bill passed into law. Maybe then, the future won't be such a hard thing to swallow.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WWF

A SLICE OF THE SWISS HIGH LIFE



Decorative wood patterns and overhanging eaves give the Grand Quartier its distinct Swiss character

Brittany Corporation, the property development maverick, introduces a new type of home at Crosswinds, Tagaytay. The Grand Quartier (pronounced as *kwôr'ti-Er*) will soon rise in one of the highest locations within the property.

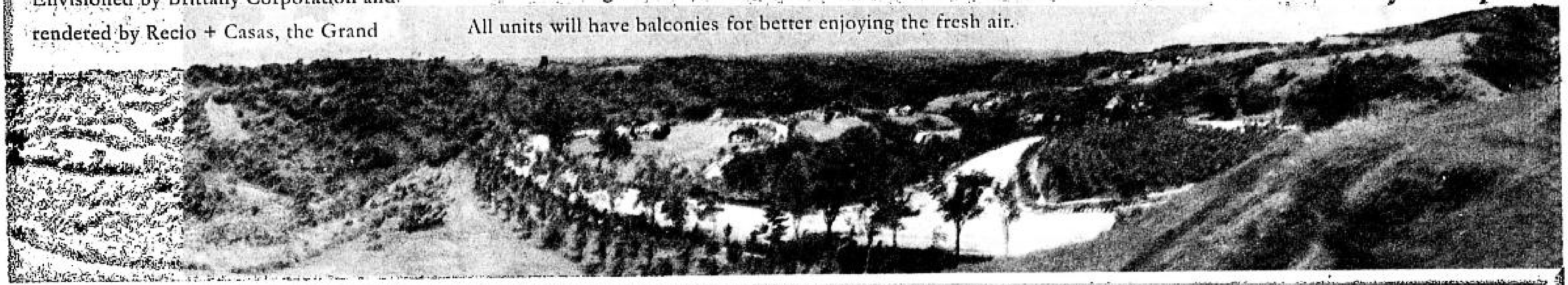
The launch of the Grand Quartier affords the luxury of Swiss living for people who have worked for a great life. For these people, the Grand Quartier presents an idyllic Swiss weekend home amidst the scent of pine, the calming quiet and the relaxing cool air.

Envisioned by Brittany Corporation and rendered by Recio + Casas, the Grand Quartier is a cluster of low rise multi-family developments embracing the Crosswinds hillside. The Grand Quartier is composed of multi-level residences with a combination of 1 and 2-bedroom units. Floor areas range between 74 square meters and 109 square meters. All units will have balconies for better enjoying the fresh air.

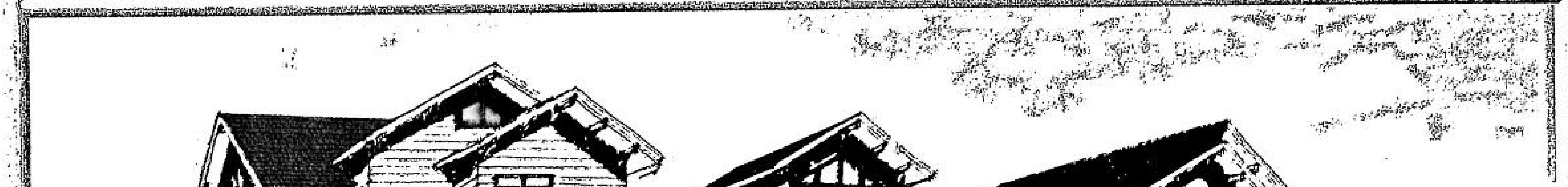
Once completed, the Grand Quartier will tower above all like the majestic chalets of Switzerland—offering a slice of the great Swiss high life.

Inquiries for the Grand Quartier are quickly coming in at a rate similar to the record pace set by Crosswinds' Swiss Quadrilles. The initial Quadrilles sold out in a record 4 months. The succeeding phase also sold out quickly. With the launching of the Grand Quartier, more people can appreciate the Crosswinds combination of location, Swiss inspiration and the over 8,000 pine trees across the estate.

To have a taste of the great Swiss high life, get a Property Preview.
Call 850 6986 or 850 2868.
Click www.brittany.com.ph



HOW SWISS IT IS



Artist's rendition of the Crosswinds Grand Quartier

One look at the Grand Quartier, (pronounced as kwôr 'ti-Er) and you know it is unmistakably Swiss. Designed with wood patterns, overhanging eaves, stone cladding and dark asphalt roof shingles, the Grand Quartier takes inspiration from classic Swiss chalets. Inside, the inspiration is carried through with the patterned wood floors and ceilings and the Swiss concept of a great room for spending time with family or guests.

And it will soon stand on the Crosswinds hillside, surrounded by pine trees, in the cool air and the calm, quite ambience. It's the perfect weekend for enjoying the great Swiss life.

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To get to Crosswinds: Head south on South Luzon Expressway. Take Sta.Rosa exit going to Tagaytay. Turn left at the Main Road. Crosswinds is 2 kms. away from Picnic Grove.

Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants

Joint Induction of Y2005 National, Metro Manila Region and Southern Luzon Region Chapter Officers, Sectoral Council Members and Committee Chairs

Friday, January 28, 2005, 6PM, Grand Ballroom, Hotel Intercontinental Manila

'get on... move on...'

Messages

My most cordial greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants as you hold your Induction Ceremony.

Your Institution has always been in the forefront of the accounting profession. The integrity of your Institution including those belonging to the private sector highly depends on the expertise and integrity of yourmembers and peers.

This occasion serves as a platform to address the critical issues and concerns confronting your organization. As you welcome your new set of officers, may you seize every opportunity to advance our economic and social transformation.

I invite you to contribute to our national agenda to cut poverty, achieve national stability, uplift the lives of the Filipino people and forge a new Philippines that is responsive to the demands and challenges of the 21st century.

Congratulations to your new officers and *mabuhay kayong lahat!*

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) on the occasion of its Induction Ceremonies for its new executive team. Entering its 76th year, the PICPA continues to embody the values, ethics, and professionalism of the Philippine CPA respected by his peers, both local and international, in the exercise of the discipline.

As the Accredited Professional Organization for CPAs, I am encouraged by the extent of your members' participation in the four sectors of commerce and industry, government, education, and public practice as well as your presence in all major cities throughout the country. May PICPA continue to grow and increase its roster of membership to include all registered CPAs in the country. I hope your organization will encourage particularly the membership of the country's newly registered CPAs that they may quickly benefit from your long years of professional training and advocacy in the industry.

PICPA's theme for 2005, "get on... move on..." captures the dynamic spirit of action that is the hallmark of your organization. My congratulations once again!

My personal thank to the incoming officers, directors, and chapter presidents for 2005, led by National President Dave Balangue. May God continue to help you in your endeavors, particularly for the betterment of the profession and for our beloved country.

Mabuhay and Pilipino!

FRANKLIN M. DRILON
Senate President
Republic of the Philippines

Congratulations to the incoming officers of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants for the Year 2005.

This year indeed marks a new era for the financial industry as well as the accounting profession as we march in the midst of continually evolving international standards and best practices. The PICPA will be one of the indispensable partners of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in spearheading the reforms to align our existing regulations with the International Accounting Standards and International Financial Reporting Standards.

The BSP and PICPA are bound by a common goal of promoting fairness, accuracy and transparency reporting. We believe that our vision of full transparency is the key in strengthening the confidence of the public in the financial industry. Their trust and confidence on the system will dictate the tempo of our development.

As the premier organization of Certified Public Accountants in the country, an equally challenging role for the incoming officers is to ensure that the learnings on the development in the profession permeates not only in the field of the practitioners but also in the academe where the seeds of the accounting profession are nurtured.

We are going through a transition where we must strike our best strategy to be able to seize all opportunities for development. Our concerted efforts will place us to the zenith of our goal to be at par with international standards.

Congratulations and I wish you success in all your endeavors!

RAFAEL B. BUENAVENTURA
Governor
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

I feel privileged to extend my felicitations and best wishes to the in-coming National Executive Officers and Directors of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, its Sectoral Council, Committee Chairpersons, and the PICPA Regional Councils of Metro Manila and Southern Luzon on the occasion of your induction into office on January 28, 2005 at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila in Makati City.

As COA Chairman and as your brother in the profession, I join all of you in looking forward to, and pro-actively working for, the attainment of PICPA's goals set under your 2005 theme: "get on... move on..." that certainly sets the tone for a year of more dynamic and aggressive development programs and activities.

This becomes specially true as PICPA, recognized as the largest and most prestigious organization of CPAs in the country, plays as major role in the unification and integration of accounting practitioners, as well as in the continuing professional education of CPAs as invisioned under the newly-enacted Philippine Accountancy Act of 2004.

These responsibilities are not new to PICPAns who have individually or collectively contributed to the advancement of the accountancy profession that now prides itself with its competent professional accountants whose standards of service may be categorized as excellent, world class and globally competitive.

And with the PICPA tradition of excellence and achievements along with the high-caliber leadership at its helm, I am confident that the Institute will once again showcase how success is attained with flying colors.

Again, congratulations and best wishes.
Mabuhay!

GUILLERMO N. CARAGUE
Chairman, Commission on Audit

Congratulations to the incoming officers of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants for the year 2005 on the occassion of your induction into office.

The accounting profession is an important link in our financial reporting chain. The recent cases of corporate scandals both here and abroad have out the spotlight on your profession. These scandals have led to many corporate reform measures now being implemented, including conformity with international standards and best practices. We are glad to note that the accounting profession has viewed the reforms in a positive light.

The theme of your organization for 2005 "get on... move on..." is very appropriate. CPAs have to be involved in the reform movement and move towards the proper implementation of the measures concerned. We trust that the new officers of your organization will lead all its members to "get on... move on" with our reforms to improve our capital market in the Philippines.

FE B. BARIN
Chairperson
Securities and Exchange Commission

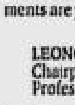
It is with joy that I greet and congratulate the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants whose members exude extraordinary dynamism, on its Induction Ceremonies for its incoming officers for the year 2005.

"get on... move on..." As the Accredited Professional Organization for CPAs, your theme captures the focus of your activities for 2005, in the light of the new Philippine Accountancy Act of 2004 and its IRR. It also emphasizes the urgency that we as a nation must face in the midst of national and global developments.

May this occasion further strengthen your commitment to the highest technical proficiency and ethical consciousness throughout your professional practice. With your support, the Commission will continue to implement the regulatory policies and programs towards producing highly qualified, socially responsible and globally competitive accountants. We will continue to nurture professionals who will give content to our nation's aspirations for progress and development.

After all, accountancy is not a profession that has to dwell on the achievements of the past for comfort, for its greatest accomplishments are yet to come.

LEONOR T. ROSERO
Chairperson
Professional Regulation Commission



On behalf of the men and women of the revenue service, I extend my warmest greetings to PICPA President David L. Balangue, and the CY 2005 officers and directors of PICPA, on their induction into office.

For many years, PICPA has been one of the Bureau's most valued partners in our efforts to continuously improve our service to the taxpaying public. Owing to the very nature of taxation, effective tax administration relies on the support and assistance of the accounting profession. Over the years, PICPA has stood as the stalwart symbol of the accounting profession" role in nation-building, and the Bureau remains immensely grateful for PICPA's continuing support in all our endeavors.

Today, as PICPA looks forward to another year in its distinguished history, its theme of "get on...move on..." is particularly timely, moreso in light of the implementation of the Philippine Accountancy Act of 2004, and the passage of tax reform measures. We in the Bureau are confident that as PICPA forges ahead, it shall continue to champion the ideals of the accounting profession with the renewed dynamism, and advocate the role of the CPA in the sustained growth of the Philippine economy.

May God favor PICPA with His enduring guidance and wisdom, and may PICPA continue to lead the accounting profession in serving the Filipino people.

GUILLERMO L. PARAYNO, Jr.
Commissioner
Bureau of Internal Revenue

2005 PICPA NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Officers

DAVID L. BALANGUE
National President

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ANTONIO T. HERNANDEZ
Asst. Treasurer

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FRANCISCO B. GONZALES, V
Asst. Secretary

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Metro Manila

GEORGE V. VILLARUZ
Metro Manila

ANTONIO P. TECSON
Metro Manila

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Northern Luzon

ROSEMARIE A. LACSINA
Northern Luzon

MANUEL V. MAPOY
Central Luzon

JOSEFINA G. CHUA
Central Luzon

ARISTON T. MITRA
Southern Luzon

MELITA B. ESTRELLADO
Southern Luzon

MA. EDITHA S. DELA CRUZ
Western Visayas

MA. ASUNCION M. GOLEZ
Western Visayas

SOTERO Q. TRINIDAD
Northern Mindanao

JOSEFE C. SORRERA-TY
Northern Mindanao

LEONORA C. PEÑA
Southern Mindanao

NELIA E. TUMARAO
Southern Mindanao

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Commerce & Industry

MA. OPHELIA L. CAMINA
Commerce & Industry

RUPERTO P. SOMERA
Education

MARIETTA B. SORIO
Education

JAIME P. NARANJO
Government

ANTONIO V. CRUZ
Public Practice

ARNEL D. DE JESUS
Public Practice

ANTONIO T. HERNANDEZ
Government

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Ex-Officio

JESSIE D. CABALUNA
Special Asst. to the President

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Rose Marie P. de Lemos
Lisa S. Glodoviza
Gregoria A. Guillermo
Ephraim G. Young

GOVERNMENT
Edgardo F. Cruz
Marina C. de Guzman
Consuelo D. Manansala
Carmela S. Perez
Conrado B. Roxas

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Erwin Vincent G. Alcala
Archimedes E. Ibay
Patricia M. Empleo
Eduardo M. Trinidad
Dionisio M. Villeta

PUBLIC PRACTICE
Rhoda C. Aspan
Donato P. Danao
Lucy L. Lim-Chan
Ma. Milagros F. Padernal
Raymundo G. Talimio, Jr.

2005 PICPA COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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CPE on the Road
Jessie D. Cabaluna
Ethics
Jose S. Tayag, Jr.
International Affairs
Eduardo B. de Guia (Chair)
Pio D. Bacongo (Co-Chair)
Legislation and By-Laws
Abelardo T. Domondon
Library and Archives
Gerardo T. Ebrada
Media and Public Relations
Ma. Luisa B. Villacorta
Membership Growth
Jaime P. Villegas
Frances S. Monje
Nathaniel P. Colobong
Emmie M. Mendoza
Fidel O. Abalos
Percival C. Salado
Lope L. Bato, Jr.
Paciencio M. Rosalem, Jr.
Professional Development & Research
Ester F. Ledesma (Chair)
Minda O. Ledesma (Co-Chair)
Publications
"Aphat" C. Martinez, Jr.
Regions, Chapters and Affiliates
Zenaida P. Alcantara
Scholarship & Educational Assistance
Samuel F. Villacampa (Chair)
Ma. Violeta V. Vicente (Co-Chair)
Students Participation
Gerard B. Sanvictores
Taxation
Leticia C. Tagle

SPECIAL COMMITTEES
Awards
Accountancy Week
Juanito G. Espino, Jr.
Ad Hoc Committee on IRR
Francisco F. Gonzalez, V
Annual National Convention
Samuel F. Villacampa
Annual Planning Conference
Manuel M. Pascual
Building Maintenance
Jessie D. Cabaluna
Commission on Elections
Lerida O. Encarnacion
Cooperatives
Eustaquio A. Ancheta
Corporate Governance
Celso P. Vivas
Environmental Accounting
Ma. Fatima C. Reyes
Financial Reporting
Julita A. Tamayao
Information Technology
Manuel D. Bautista
Outstanding Accounting Students
Samuel F. Villacampa
Project Website
Rosario Q. Yu
Public Biddings
Dominador A. Barrion
Special Events
Randi Ovidio G. Lorica (Chair)
Aphat C. Martinez, Jr. (Co-Chair)
Ways and Means
Juanito G. Espino, Jr.
Women Development and Empowerment
Ma. Isabel T. Madamba

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Auditing and Accounting System
Francisco B. Gonzalez, V (Chair)
Antonio V. Cruz
Ariston T. Mitra
Ma. Asuncion M. Golez
Sotero Q. Trinidad
Nelia E. Tumarao

Operations and Management
Estelita C. Aguirre (Chair)
Antonio P. Tecson
Augusto Aureo Q. Nisce
Rosemarie E. Lacsina
Leonora C. Pena

2005 PICPA METRO MANILA REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICERS

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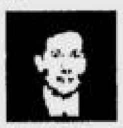
Chair

ANTONIO P. TECSON
Vice Chair for Operations

Rodelio C. Acosta
Vice Chair - Professional Development

Myrna S. Javier
Secretary

Albert Paul C. Uy
Treasurer


David L. Balangue
Member

Marcos T. Lim
Member

Edgar H. Molina
Member

Dolores A. Santiago
Member

Arcely A. Rodriguez
Member

Program of Activities

Invocation	
National Anthem	
Opening Remarks	Dr. Ruperto P. Somera *Vice President for Membership*
Acknowledgement of Special Guests	Ms. Estelita C. Aguirre *Vice President for Operations*
PICPA National Induction Rites	
Valedictory Address	Mr. Pio D. Bacongo *2004 PICPA National President*
Presentation of Presidential Awards	Mr. Pio D. Bacongo
Induction of 2005 PICPA National Board of Directors	Hon. Franklin M. Drilon *Senate President* Republic of the Philippines
Turn-Over Ceremonies	
Unveiling of the Theme	
Inaugural Speech	Mr. David L. Balangue *2005 PICPA National President*
Presentation of Leadership Award	
Induction of:	
• Sectoral Council Members	Mr. David L. Balangue
• Committee Chairs	
• PICPA Foundation, Inc. - Board of Trustees PICPA Ethics Board	Hon. Franklin M. Drilon
Introduction of Guest Speaker	Mr. Eduardo B. de Guia *1997 PICPA National President*
Message	Hon. Franklin M. Drilon
Metro Manila Region Induction Rites	
Valedictory Address	Ms. Arcely A. Rodriguez
Induction of 2005 Metro Manila Regional Council Officers	Mr. David L. Balangue *2005 PICPA National President*
Turn-Over Ceremonies	
Inaugural Speech	Mr. George V. Villaruz *2005 Metro Manila Region Chair*
Induction of:	
• Chapter Officers & Directors	Mr. George V. Villaruz
• Chapter Committee Chairs	
Southern Luzon Region Induction Rites	
Induction of 2005 Southern Luzon Regional Council Officers	Mr. David L. Balangue
Closing Remarks	Mr. Manuel M. Pascual *Executive Vice President*

Messages

In behalf of the Board of Accountancy, I would like to convey our warmest greetings and congratulations to the 2005 directors, officers and committee chairmen of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) who are being inducted into office on January 28, 2005 at the Hotel Intercontinental-Manila, Makati City.

Your theme for 2005 "get on ... move on..." is indeed very appropriate and timely. In this day and age, the world is no longer what it used to be. With the advent of the New Economy, there are higher demands for efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness. With barrier-free business and state of the art communication as pillars of globalization, the pace of the change has never been this fast. The manifest reality of the current economic developments affecting the financial and corporate world calls for an accounting profession that is capable to respond to the needs of the times. As CPAs with a mission — that of being the business world's most trusted advisors, it becomes necessary for all of us to be professionally competent. Moreover, we must continue to pursue what is right with compassion and dedication, strong sense of morality, independence and integrity. As wave after wave of advancements come our way, we must learn to ride at the crest and not at the bottom. Mastery over modernization is the only way we could stay afloat and achieve the extraordinary. May the new PICPA leaders lead us to successfully address such concerns.

Please accept our best wishes for a fruitful and successful year.

EUGENE T. MATEO
Chairman
Board of Accountancy

As your National President for 2005, I extend to you a warm hand of thanks and congratulations on this, our Induction Ceremonies.

As the PICPA's executive team for the year, I ask each of the officers and directors to pause and contemplate on the responsibilities of the mantle of service we don for the Institute and its membership, particularly in terms of service, seamless execution of our deliverables, accountability to our publics, and continuing development and preeminence of the profession.

CPAs are often placed in positions of trust. We are gatekeepers for the financial position of every conceivable element of society. We are true professionals who possess qualifications, particularly transparency in our discipline that inspires immense respect and confidence. We are a very valued and trusted professional who does not only keep up with the quickly changing world hround us, but who continues to help shape it.

As your National President, it is my ardent desire to mold and develop the role of leadership in every Philippine CPA. Thanks to the support of your Institute in the various work committees and projects, particularly the Continuing Professional Education program, the PICPA membership is poised to discover the opportunities in our economy and beyond, towards the development of a bigger role for the CPA. It is my personal goal to develop not only the confidence and maturity, but the professional expertise of the Philippine CPA to be equally competitive in the international marketplace.

My colleagues in the profession, let us mark this year in an atmosphere of celebrating our mandate to serve PICPA, our peers, our profession, and our country. Let us together give thanks to the Lord who put us together to do His work!

DAVID L. BALANGUE
2005 PICPA National President

It is my distinct honor and privilege to congratulate our 2005 PICPA National Officers headed by a very able and competent president Dave Balangue on the occasion of their induction to office this year. I firmly believe that as CPA's it is indeed a very worthwhile and fulfilling experience to serve PICPA especially at the national level. Our profession is facing a lot of challenges as well as opportunities and I am greatly confident that this year's set of officers will responsibly perform and meet this challenges ahead.

This year's theme, "get on... move on..." is indeed very timely, that is, for all sectors of the accountancy profession to rally behind and unite and move forward towards professional excellence and global competitiveness. Last year's theme "A call for personal integrity and commitment to professional accountability, collectively our mission (goodmorning_picpa.com)" was a wake-up call and a renewal. Now that we are awake, we need to get on and move on especially with the implementation of the new Accountancy Law.

Last year we celebrated our 75th foundation year. PICPA has been known as among the most prestigious, organized and outstanding professional organization not only in the Philippines but even in Asia Pacific Region. The gains and recognition that we achieved was not the work of any individual leader but by all dedicated and commited CPA's in the country through the year. Let us move-on and do our share and live-up to the vision and mission that PICPA stands for.

In behalf of the PICPA Foundation Inc., your partner in promoting the best interest and professional development of all CPA's let's move-on!

Thank you and mabuhay and PICPA!.

PIO D. BACONGA
Chairman, PICPA Foundation

A new chapter in the history of the country's accounting profession unfolds as the New Accountancy Law, the Philippine Accountancy Act of 2004, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) are now in place. These require enormous tasks ahead of us since our Institution has to undergo a complete overhaul to meet the corporate requirements for the new organizational structure, comply with the membership requirements to maintain our status as the Accredited Professional Organization (APO), meet the financial reporting requirements, implement CPE programs, and assist our members' accreditation compliance with various government agencies. Overall, this will prepare us, as members of the profession, for the challenges on a global perspective.

As we envision PICPA as the APO for CPAs, the dedicated and commited Board of Directors of the PICPA Metro Manila Regional Council will work hand in hand for the common good and delight of our membership, hence, continue the legacy our predecessors have achieved.

PICPA's theme for 2005 "get on... move on..." is a call for all of us, not only to the national, regional and chapter officers' commitment to work at our best to achieve the tasks and deliver the services due to our members but also an opportunity for the members to be actively involved as new events unfold in our profession this year.

We live in challenging and trying times that, in these times, we shall not quit trying in working for the common good of our profession. I would like to quote Galatians Chapter 6: Verse 9 which gives hope and eventually inspire all of us entrusted to the various positions in PICPA, "And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart". With all the challenges and opportunities that await us, I enjoin all our 2005 officers, committee chairs and members to persevere and work as a team, and to "get on... move on..." in 2005.

God bless us all and Mabuhay!

GEORGE V. VILLARUZ
Chair
PICPA Metro Manila Region

To all the 2005 PICPA National Board of Directors and the Council Officers of the Metro Manila Region,

A new year has just begun and as you wake up to a new day, remember that it's God's way of saying "One more chance, My child!".

I'm sure all of you have been in the service of the Institute for quite some time. And whatever experiences you have encountered in the past, be it good or unpleasant, now is that "One more chance, My child", one more chance to make things better.

The challenges of leading and keeping our colleagues abreast with today's trends, and helping them be at par with other CPAs in the first world, are now in your hands. If we have "fast-tracked" PICPA... moved "together onwards"... been "partners for progress"... rose up to the call of "goodmorning_picpa.com"... I don't see any reason why we can't "get on... move on..." to better heights!

My CONGRATULATIONS and BEST WISHES to all the inductees!

ARCELY A. RODRIGUEZ
Outgoing Chair
PICPA Metro Manila Region

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Negros Occidental Chapter
Amparo T. Duque
Teresita Dizon

Semirara raked by court order

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

STOCK punters' favorite Semirara Coal Corp. has been ordered by an Antique court to stop exploiting nearly a tenth of its mining concession, the subject of an overlapping claim from a grazing concessionaire.

Judge Antonio Bantolo of the Regional Trial Court of Antique Branch 13 issued the writ of preliminary injunction way back on Oct. 6, 2004, but the company has apparently kept the existence of the adverse ruling as well as the court case from its ongoing foreign and local road show.

Semirara's already few disclosures and latest reports to the Philippine Stock Exchange were silent about that suit, as well as a related court case filed way back in November 2003 in a Caloocan court.

Semirara is being tipped off as the next hot stock "similar to Fil-Hispano," whose share price has more than doubled since its November offering. According to the market grapevine, the Semirara secondary offering is more than five times oversubscribed.

The twin court cases had been filed by one Henry G. Lim of HGL Development Corp., who claims his 367 hectares of forest grazing land leased to him by the government had illegally been taken over and included in the 3,832-ha mining concession of Semirara.

According to court documents, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had already cancelled Lim's 25-year lease, originally set to expire in 2009, for alleged non-payment of rent and failure to submit annual grazing reports.

Lim disputes this, saying the DENR had already accepted the late payments and penalties as well as the late submission of the reports.

The contested land, which had been fenced off, bulldozed, and built over with roads and a structure by the Consunjis, the majority shareowners of Semirara, sits right next to the listed firm's Panian mine.

Terminal 3 tailwinds

THE GOVERNMENT has set a June 21 opening for the controversial Terminal 3, but foreign airlines are balking at being rushed into moving in unless the airport authority complies with a 30-point operational checklist.

In addition, the foreign airlines still await the so-called tenants guidelines for the construction of offices and lounges and, at the very least, a certificate of completion of the terminal or an authority from the terminal contractor allowing the airlines to start office construction.

According to the industry grapevine, the airlines are asking for a six-month lead-time to construct the terminal offices and train ground handlers or, in a crunch, a minimum of three-four months, provided the previous space allocations granted by Piatco, the graft-ridden operator of Terminal 3 prior to the government takeover, are kept by the Manila International Airport Authority.

Money-go-round

- LEVI'S has moved the Filipino country manager in Indonesia, Ramon Martelino, back to the Philippines to head the local operations effective next month.
- The modest-sized Poblador Bautista & Reyes law office, lawyers for star impeachment witness Clarissa Ocampo, is starting to get noticed by overseas industry chroniclers.

The firm is now being cited along the traditional "Big Three"—Sycip Salazar, Romulo Mabanta, and Accra Law—in the latest edition of The Asia Pacific Legal 500 as a "good all-rounder with strength in dispute resolution, corporate advice and labor law."

Heard through the grapevine

FORMER Trade and Industry Secretary Rizalino Navarro, who now works for the Yuchengcos, is being tipped off as a strong candidate for the governorship of the Bangko Sentral.

Downside: Like incoming Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Navarro is a former chair of SGV.

Upside: Fiscal and monetary policies could arguably be aligned without second-guessing from each side.

Meanwhile, taipan Alfonso Yuchengco himself just might make it as the country's next ambassador to Washington, where, in his limited spare time, he could continue receiving private piano lessons, away from the prying eyes of his tough daughters.

Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com

GOINGS-ON

Job fair

HUMAN resources firm John Clements Consultants Inc. will hold a job fair from Jan. 24 to Jan. 28 in Cagayan de Oro City. The firm will hold the event in partnership with a multinational call center company in need of English-speaking applicants with strong computer skills.

The job fair will be held at the Searsolin Center, F. Masterson Ave. (Lumbia Road), Cagayan de Oro City. On Jan. 28, John Clements Consultants will also sponsor a job fair at the Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Early applicants will be given priority.

GSIS pension talks

EVERYTHING about the Government Service Insurance System's (GSIS) pension program will be discussed today during the the pension fund's regular weekly show, the GSIS Members' Hour.

The GSIS Members' Hour—which airs Fridays from 6 to 7 p.m. over NBN 4—has invited GSIS officials to explain the various modes of retirement available to GSIS members.

The program will also discuss the issue of survivorship, or the pension program the GSIS extends to dependents of deceased GSIS pensioners.

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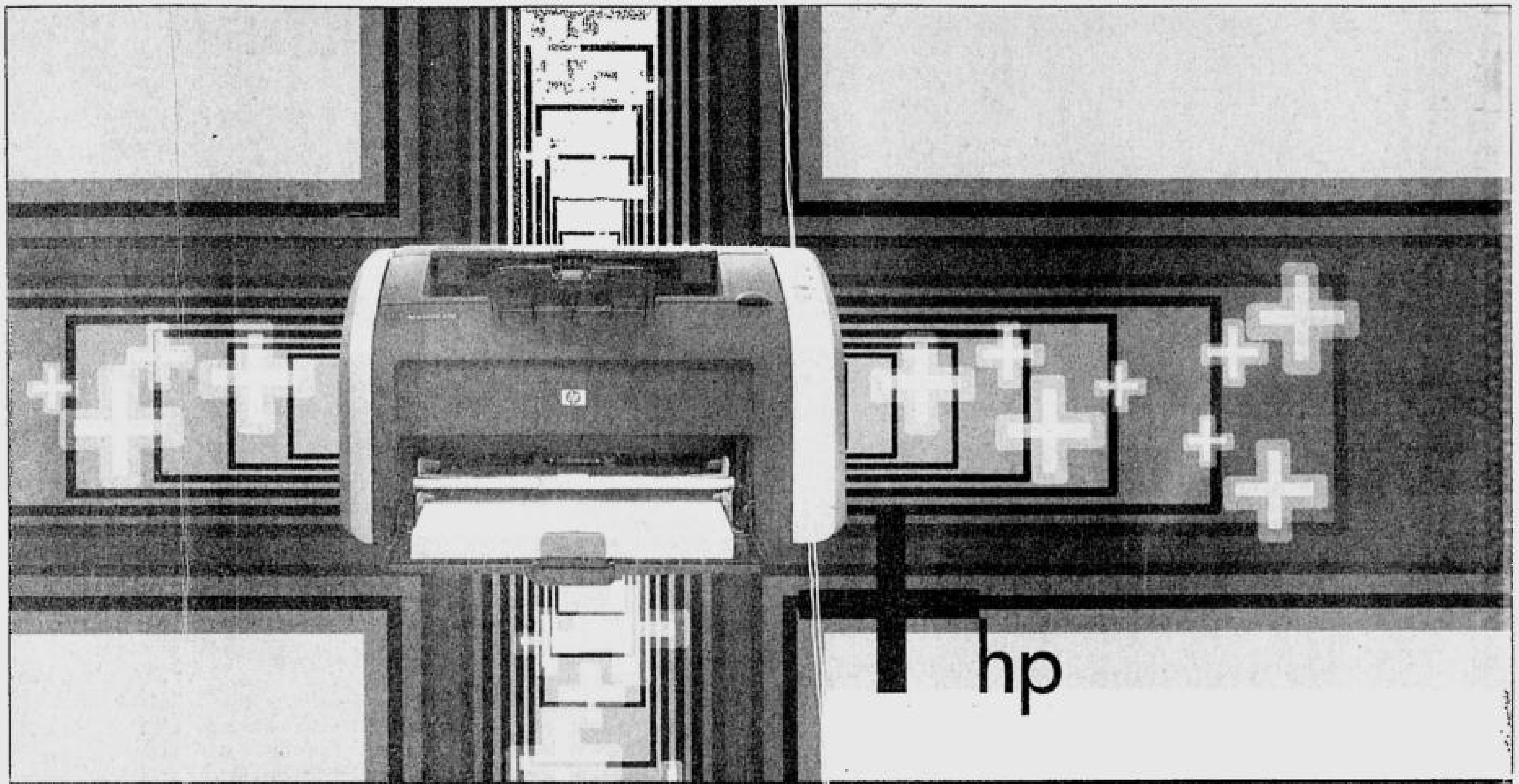

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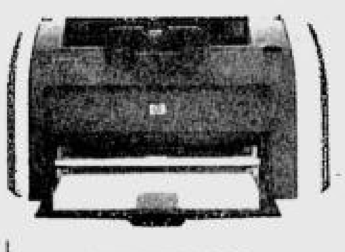

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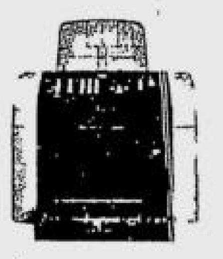

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SEC approves Manila Water IPO

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) has approved the plan of Manila Water Co., Inc., the water distribution arm of the Ayala group of companies, to offer part of its shares to the public.

SEC documents showed that MWCI plans to offer 824.25 million shares - at between P5 and P6.50 each - which would bring in as much as P5.35 billion in proceeds.

The money will be used for capital expenditure and payment of concession fees to the Metropolitan Waterworks Sewerage System.

The public offering will consist of 550 million primary shares of MWCI, with the balance coming from MWCI shares held by Ayala Corp., United Utilities Pacific Holdings BV, BPI Capital Corp. and employees.

About half of the total offer, equivalent to 471.28 million shares, will be set aside for international investors.

The rest will be sold to local investors with BPI Capital as local underwriter.

In line with the offering, BPI Capital, Ayala and United Utilities granted MWCI's international underwriter UBS Investment Bank an option to buy up to 78.49 million MWCI shares within 30 days from the start of trading at the stock market.

Investment banks target March 17 as the listing date for the shares.

MWCI generated P4.2 billion in revenues last year, up from P3.78 billion in 2003.

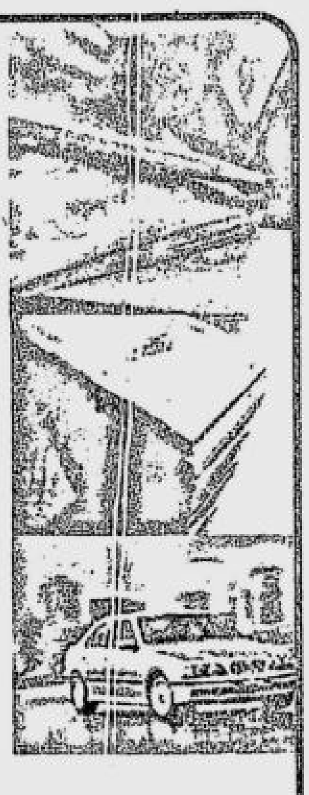
Net earnings, on the other hand, stood at P1.34 billion last year from P1.15 billion in 2003.

Last year, the International Finance Corp. (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank, invested $45 million in Manila Water, its first in the water sector in East Asia.

The investment gave IFC an equity of around 9 percent in the water distribution company, which currently serves more than four million residents in the east zoneof the MWSS franchise.

The water company was formed only in August 1997. From a consortium that inherited seemingly insurmountable network losses (up to 63 percent), Manila Water managed to turn the company around to become one of the country's fastest growing organizations. Its capital investments (totaling more than P9 billion) allowed the company to achieve significant improvements in billed volume and operating efficiencies.

your rewards



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Foreign firms to bid for Manila plant

By Abigail L. Ho

FIVE local and foreign firms and consortia have expressed plans to bid for the 200-megawatt (MW) Manila Thermal Power Plant, the first idle plant of the National Power Corp. to be put on the auction block.

Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) vice president for asset valuation and disposal Froilan Tampinco said three of these firms were foreign.

In its bid invitation, Psalm gave interested firms until Jan. 14 to indicate their intent to participate in the bidding. Actual bids have to be submitted by Feb. 18.

Psalm turned to selling Napocor's idle plants after finalizing the sale of six operating plants last year—five hydroelectric and one coal-fired.

Four of these idle or decommissioned plants are scheduled to be sold within the year.

Psalm recently opened the bidding for the 54-MW Cebu II Power Plant in Toledo City, Cebu.

Interested parties have until Feb. 8 to submit their letters of intent, and until March 15 to submit the actual bids.

Originally designed as a baseload plant connected to the Cebu grid, the Cebu II plant had three generating units commissioned between May 1982 and April 1983. The plant was shut down on Dec. 1, 1997.

Since that time, Psalm said the plant's auxiliaries, including its steam system, condensate equipment, pumps and controls, control equipment, gauges and panels remained functional and in good working condition.

After the Manila and Cebu II plants, Psalm will be selling off the 22.3-MW General Santos plant in April and the 104-MW Aplaya plant in May.

Tax . . .

From page B1

from the proposal to lift VAT exemptions of several products and services, and P35 billion from the proposed capping of allowable input credits.

The Attrition Act is a reward and penalty system for employees and officials of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs. It provides for the granting of monetary incentives to BIR and BOC people who will meet their revenue collection targets, and the imposition of penalty, which may include dismissal from service, on those who will fail to meet their targets.

In the meantime, the twin proposals related to VAT are expected to generate over P60 billion in annual revenue.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, a member of the Ledac, earlier expressed confidence that Congress would throw its support for the pending tax measures, although some legislators had expressed reservations over the tax proposals.

"They (legislators) are aware, as much as we, in the executive branch, are of the importance of passing these measures," he said.

The Ledac said it was expecting the VAT proposal to be approved by the bicameral conference committee of the House and the Senate by February.

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(As of January 27, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.7	4.5	3.7	4.2	345,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28.5	30	28	30	850,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	56.5	57	56.5	57	834,400
China Banking Corp.	570	570	570	570	400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46	46	45.5	46	136,700
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.43	0.46	0.43	0.44	8,000,000
International Exch. Bank	18.5	18.5	18.25	18.5	99,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30.5	29.5	30.5	1,054,500
Philippine National Bank	27	27.5	27	27.5	14,700
Phil. Savings Bank	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	3,000
Security Bank Corp.	31.5	31.5	30	30	11,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28	27.5	28	17,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	50,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	194	194	194	194	80
Manulife Financial Corp.	2400	2400	2400	2400	1,560
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.16	2.16	1.98	1.98	466,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	124	124	124	124	50
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1780	1780	1775	1775	1,940
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18	18.25	18	18	5,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.8	1.84	1.8	1.82	17,213,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	950	950	940	950	54,110
Ipeople Inc.	4.1	4.6	4.05	4.45	722,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.037	18,400,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.43	80,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.75	3.85	3.75	3.85	9,012,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1440	1450	1435	1440	129,320
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.66	1,290,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	103,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17	16.75	17	66,600
Manila Electric Co. B	25	25.5	24.75	25.5	478,400
Petron Corp.	3.8	3.85	3.8	3.85	2,728,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	50,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.36	1.8	1.36	1.62	19,823,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.54	1.68	1.54	1.68	8,302,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7	7.4	7	7.3	1,233,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	26,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.43	0.44	0.43	0.43	600,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.65	4.15	3.65	4.15	16,637,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.16	1.34	1.16	1.34	201,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.2	3.05	3.1	245,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	29.5	29.5	18,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28	28	27.5	27.5	148,600
Rfm Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	210,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	52,900
San Miguel Corp. B	78	78	77.5	77.5	74,000
Universal Robina Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	2,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	600,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	15	15	15	15	1,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	213,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.8	7,276,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.52	0.58	0.52	0.55	520,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.75	3.85	3.7	3.85	1,146,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.029	11,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.9	1.92	684,000
APC Group Inc.	0.185	0.2	0.18	0.2	12,160,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.0095	0.009	0.009	735,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.42	0.45	540,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.24	101,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	21.25	21.5	21.25	21.5	30,200
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.99	0.94	0.99	25,420,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.245	0.245	10,000,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	650,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.35	0.28	0.35	27,490,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.8	5.2	4.7	5.2	13,228,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.035	0.039	0.035	0.038	38,300,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	142,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	9.1	9.2	8.6	8.9	2,152,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	35	36.5	35	36.5	829,700
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	1,700,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.32	1.38	2,950,000
Ionics Inc.	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.56	23,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	21	21	21	21	19,000
J.G Summit Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.15	3.15	198,000
Keppel Holdings	0.72	0.72	0.7	0.7	20,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.44	2.44	255,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.36	1.36	2,318,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.49	0.5	0.47	0.47	16,250,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	40,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	300,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.22	1.22	80,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.155	0.165	650,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	450,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	200,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.4	0.48	0.4	0.4	920,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.65	3.5	3.65	30,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.175	0.135	0.155	33,250,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.17	0.17	1,300,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.24	490,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.8	1.02	0.8	1.02	50,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	5,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	160,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0625	0.0725	0.0625	0.0725	19,700,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.62	0.63	0.62	0.63	1,690,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.12	1.06	1.06	3,708,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.58	400,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	130,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	2,520,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	18	18	17.75	18	138,600
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	900
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.5	11,800,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	90,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.3	0.32	5,110,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	250,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.38	0.39	13,570,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.38	1.32	1.38	2,250,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	820,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.67	1,160,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.16	270,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	120,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	1,910,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.5	1.44	1.48	1,182,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.3	8.4	5,261,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	40,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.74	0.79	0.74	0.79	800,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.015	393,900,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.8	8.2	7.8	8	2,172,000
Benguet Corp. A	5.3	7.2	5.3	7	149,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.2	3.85	3.2	3.85	211,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.48	0.48	0.46	0.47	20,110,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.54	39,630,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	377,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.039	0.039	0.036	0.037	637,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	702,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.38	1.46	1.38	1.42	17,188,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.66	1.78	1.66	1.74	24,508,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.44	0.45	0.43	0.44	1,510,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	58,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	64,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.009	0.0075	0.0085	1,241,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.008	0.009	0.008	0.009	493,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.4	0.49	0.4	0.48	900,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.47	0.5	0.47	0.5	580,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.014	0.012	0.013	166,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	3.1	2.6	2.9	685,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.075	0.08	0.075	0.08	15,100,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.41	1,800,000

CURRENCIES

January 27, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.764409	1.000000	55.3680
Japan	Yen	0.007419	0.009705	0.5373
United Kingdom	Pound	1.439153	1.882700	104.2413
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098019	0.128228	7.0997
Switzerland	Franc	0.646053	0.845166	46.7952
Canada	Dollar	0.620362	0.811557	44.9343
Singapore	Dollar	0.468445	0.612820	33.9306
Australia	Dollar	0.591099	0.773276	42.8147
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.027664	2.652590	146.8686
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.203843	0.266667	14.7648
Brunei	Dollar	0.467014	0.610948	33.8270
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000109	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019875	0.026001	1.4396
UAE	Dirham	0.208155	0.272309	15.0772
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.308200	72.4324
Argentina	Peso	0.261784	0.342466	18.9617
Brazil	Real	0.286510	0.374813	20.7526
Denmark	Kroner	0.134319	0.175716	9.7290
India	Rupee	0.017504	0.022899	1.2679
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.201187	0.263193	14.5725
Mexico	New Peso	0.067914	0.088845	4.9192
New Zealand	Dollar	0.548829	0.717978	39.7530
Norway	Kroner	0.120970	0.158253	8.7622
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012912	0.016892	0.9353
South Africa	Rand	0.128840	0.168549	9.3322
Korea	Won	0.000741	0.000969	0.0537
Sweden	Kroner	0.110225	0.144196	7.9838
Syria	Pound	0.014709	0.019242	1.0654
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024114	0.031546	1.7466
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000399	0.000522	0.0289

THREAT OF CREDIT DOWNGRADE

With Attrition Act, RP hopes to keep credit rating

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has been updating Moody's Investors Service on the progress of the government's fiscal reform efforts, hoping that the international ratings firms would spare the Philippines from a costly credit-rating downgrade.

Finance officials, in a teleconference with officials from Moody's yesterday morning, reported the passage of the Attrition Act of 2005 and the better-than-expected budget deficit for 2004, among others, to give the foreign evaluators a picture of the pace of the government effort to sort out its fiscal problem.

"We gave them an update, which we obviously hope will have a positive effect on the rating-review they are conducting," Finance Undersecretary Eric Recto told reporters.

He said, however, that he could not predict how the updates would influence Moody's decision, whether or not to pursue its plan to downgrade the Philippines' credit rating.

Moody's is currently reviewing the country's fiscal climate, and is expected to announce its decision next month. Last year, it warned that the country's credit rating would experience downside pressures if the Arroyo administration would fail to implement right away the proposed revenue-raising measures.

Moody's warning came before the sin taxes law was enacted in December last year.

The DOF is hoping that the passage of the sin tax law in December as well as that of the Attrition Act of 2005 early this week will ease negative pressures on its credit rating. The country's credit rating with Moody's stands at Ba2, or two notches below investment grade.

The government expects to raise P15 billion in additional revenue a year from the sin taxes law, and another P10 billion from the Attrition Act.

The Attrition Act of 2005 is a reward and penalty system for employees and officials of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs. It seeks to give monetary incentives to those who will meet their revenue collection targets, and to dismiss from service those who will fail to do so.

The DOF is also hoping that the positive data for 2004 will improve the country's fiscal image. Last year, the government was able to keep its budget deficit at P186.1 billion, or below the ceiling of P197.8 billion.

The government is keeping its fingers crossed that Moody's would not follow the lead of ratings firm Standard & Poor's, which recently lowered the Philippines' rating by a notch. S&P downgraded the Philippines' long-term foreign currency debt to BB- from BB.

A credit rating downgrade normally increases a government's borrowing cost, as creditors use the rating as a reason to seek higher interest rates.

Higher borrowing cost would aggravate the government's already precarious fiscal standing.

Legacy of transparency

By Ernesto M. Ordonez

COMMENTARY

DURING the Jan. 25 meeting of the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Anti Smuggling (COCAS), the Bureau of Customs presented a P500-million computerization project that would curb smuggling and minimize corruption.

The Alyansa Agrikultura representative agreed with the proposal. However, according to one of the Alyansa leaders, there is one tool that will cost nothing so long as the political will to use it is there: transparency.

It is this transparency that has been responsible for the drop in the smuggling rate of containerized vans carrying agricultural products, from 40 percent to less than one percent in Metro Manila.

Frustrated

At the beginning of 2003, agricultural producers of pork, chicken and vegetables felt total frustration over the widespread smuggling.

According to Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, then head of the Presidential Task Force on Anti Smuggling, the smuggling rate for containerized vans had reached 40 percent.

The word in the private sector was that government officials who were inspecting the vans were in cahoots with the smugglers. No one could do anything about it since it was only the government personnel who knew what was really going on.

However, this soon changed. Members of the Presidential Security Guard and farmer representatives were all allowed to fully inspect the vans. With this new transparency, the smuggling rate dropped to less than one percent within three months.

The case of carrots

To understand what this means to the lives of farmers, let us take the case of carrots.

Eighty thousand carrot farmers in the Cordilleras would break even at the price of P12. They would usually sell their carrots for P16. But when the carrots from China, smuggled into the country with no health certificates, sold in Metro Manila for P6, the general carrot price plunged. The Cordillera farmers suffered tremendously.

Shortly after the inspection of suspected vans began, 75 containers of vegetables valued at approximately P60 million were seized. The price of carrots went back to their normal levels, thus saving the livelihood of 80,000 Cordillera farmers.

Undervaluation

A recently signed customs administrative order largely drafted by the private sector now allows transparency.

As contained in the order, both the stated transaction value of an imported item and its published average world market price must be submitted for easy comparison.

In the past, the customs assessor had the sole discretion whether to bring up for review a case of possible undervaluation. You can imagine the bribes and corruption that took place.

An imported product might be undervalued by as much as 10 percent of the world market price. Many local producers, who had to pay 10-percent VAT on the actual price, had to compete with importers who would pay only one percent of this price because of undervaluation.

As a result, many firms closed down. Instead of helping local producers create jobs, the government was killing these producers, spurring unemployment and poverty.

But just as transparency solved the problem of the smuggled vans, so too would it clear up the problem of undervaluation.

Possible loophole

There is one remaining potential problem. When a suspected undervaluation case goes to the Valuation and Classification Review Committee (VCRC), the good work previously done as a result of transparency might become useless. All the VCRC members are from the Bureau of Customs, thus there is no check and balance. It is here that we should also institute transparency.

Even if those from the private sector cannot be VCRC members, they still must have access to these meetings as observers. In this way, any mischief may be uncovered. The mere fact that the private sector is present will already have served its purpose as a deterrent.

Other success stories

In the early '90s, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the most successful government livelihood program in Asia was the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Tulong Sa Tao program, which I managed for eight years. I attribute a large part of this success to the principle of transparency that then DTI Secretary Jose Conception Jr. instilled in the program. In the provincial committees, four out of five of the loan review committee members were from the private sector. With this transparency, political pressure and unscrupulous deals were minimized.

For the Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects during the latter part of President Fidel Ramos' term, regional chairs from the private sector were appointed and given the mandate to monitor the projects.

Because of this kind of transparency, there were hardly any complaints of corruption reported for any of the projects.

Legacy of transparency

Concepcion was consistent in proposing transparency for the multimillion-peso bids and awards meetings at the Department of National Defense.

This was done in the presence of high level private sector individuals such as former Finance Secretary Vicente Jaime and former Trade Secretary Vicente Paterno.

Concepcion said that when the DND agreed to this, they did much to ensure the proper use of huge resources.

It is a legacy of transparency that the COCAS will leave behind when it finally fulfills its mission.

It is this same legacy that that will do wonders in curbing corruption and making good governance a reality.

(The author is the chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@ yahoo.com or telefax 8516635)

Mendoza: 3 Asian carriers eye direct flights to Clark

By Clarissa S. Batino

THREE Asian carriers are now seeking the go-ahead of the transportation department before they can mount direct flights to and from Clark International Airport, according to Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

So far, only South Korea's Asiana Airlines fly regularly to and from the former United States military air base in Pampanga. It flies to and from Clark five times weekly from Incheon, Korea.

Mendoza refused to name the carriers. But a transportation official said that among the airlines mentioned were Air Asia of Malaysia and its subsidiary Thai Air Asia.

"There is also another Asian carrier called Jetstar, but it wants to fly to Manila from Singapore, not to Clark," Mendoza told reporters. "There are three airlines from three different Asian countries that are interested to fly directly to Clark."

In an effort to decongest the Manila air hub, the Arroyo administration has been trying to attract more airlines to operate in Clark.

Mendoza said the government would be offering incentives, such as exempt commercial airlines from paying aeronautical fees and other charges in Clark Airport for at least six months.

"We want to attract carriers into Clark so we are giving incentives," said the transport chief.

Sources said many low-cost Asian carriers would like to operate in the Philippines. Jetstar, Air Asia and Thai Air Asia are all low-cost operators.

Tomas Mañalac, executive director of the Civil Aeronautics Board, said that Jet Star Asia had submitted documents to support its application for a foreign air carrier's permit so it could start flying from Singapore to Manila.

The CAB chief said that Air Asia of Malaysia and its Thai subsidiary have also informed the transportation department of their interest to fly to the Philippines.

PRULINK Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	PRU LIFE U.K. Current Week January 25, 2005	 Last Week January 18, 2005
Bond Fund - Peso	1.19160	1.18110
Managed Fund - Peso	1.30586	1.28737
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.0841	1.0785

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

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VOLVO ADVISORY
THE 2004 PRICE PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR THE VOLVO RANGE OF LUXURY VEHICLES IS UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2005.

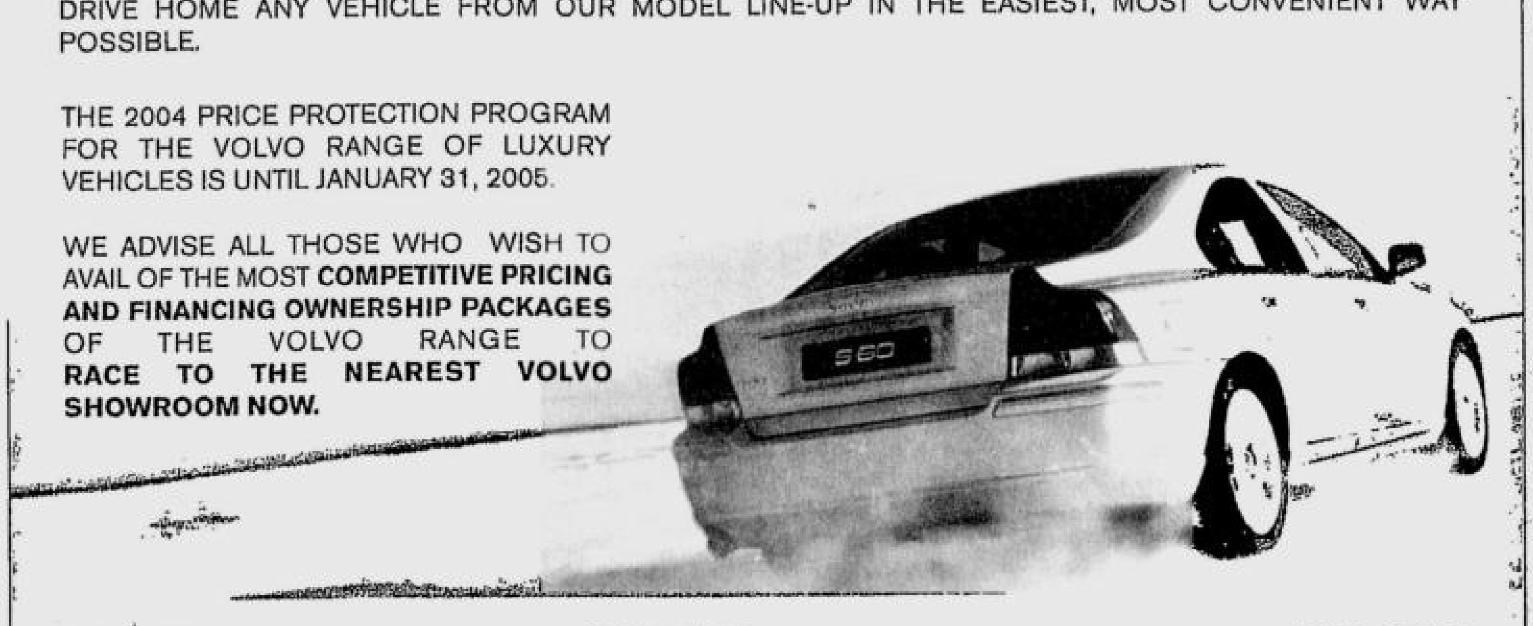
THE LOCAL LUXURY CAR MARKET EXHIBITS DYNAMISM TO A HILT AS IT OFFERS NEW BRANDS, UPDATED MODELS AND BETTER VARIANTS. ALONG WITH THIS, HOWEVER, ARE FACTORS THAT SOMEHOW THREATEN TO DIMINISH THE VITALITY OF THE MARKET LIKE INCREASED FREIGHT ON-BOARD (FOB) COSTS, FOREIGN EXCHANGE FLUCTUATIONS AND IMPORT REGULATIONS.

IN AN EFFORT TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES, VOLVO ANNUALLY UPDATES ITS PRICE PROTECTION PROGRAM. THE VOLVO PRICE PROTECTION PROGRAM COVERS ALL AREAS THAT HELP MAXIMIZE THE VALUE GAINED BY ITS CUSTOMERS. INTEGRAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM ARE (1) THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF STOCKS TO ENSURE ALL PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE ARE THE LATEST AND FRESHEST OFF THE PRODUCTION LINE; (2) EXTENDED SUPPORT FROM VOLVO CAR CORPORATION IN SWEDEN TO OFFSET THE FLUCTUATIONS OF COSTS DUE TO IMPORTATION, TAXATION, AND ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS.

VOLVO OFFERS PACKAGES THAT GIVES THE MOST VALUE FOR PURCHASES THEIR CLIENTS MAKE. THE VOLVO PRICE PROTECTION PROGRAM PRESENTS CLIENTS A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO REWARD THEMSELVES WITH LUXURY, POWER, AND PRESTIGE ALL IN ONE VALUE-LADEN PACK. THIS IS THE TIME TO DRIVE HOME ANY VEHICLE FROM OUR MODEL LINE-UP IN THE EASIEST, MOST CONVENIENT WAY POSSIBLE.

THE 2004 PRICE PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR THE VOLVO RANGE OF LUXURY VEHICLES IS UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2005.

WE ADVISE ALL THOSE WHO WISH TO AVAIL OF THE MOST **COMPETITIVE PRICING AND FINANCING OWNERSHIP PACKAGES** OF THE VOLVO RANGE TO **RACE TO THE NEAREST VOLVO SHOWROOM NOW.**



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893-8621 TO 22, 26 TO 27 makatisales@volvophils.com

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Computer courses for the blind ongoing

A NON-GOVERNMENT organization founded for and by the blind recently started classes for visually impaired persons in its computer training courses.

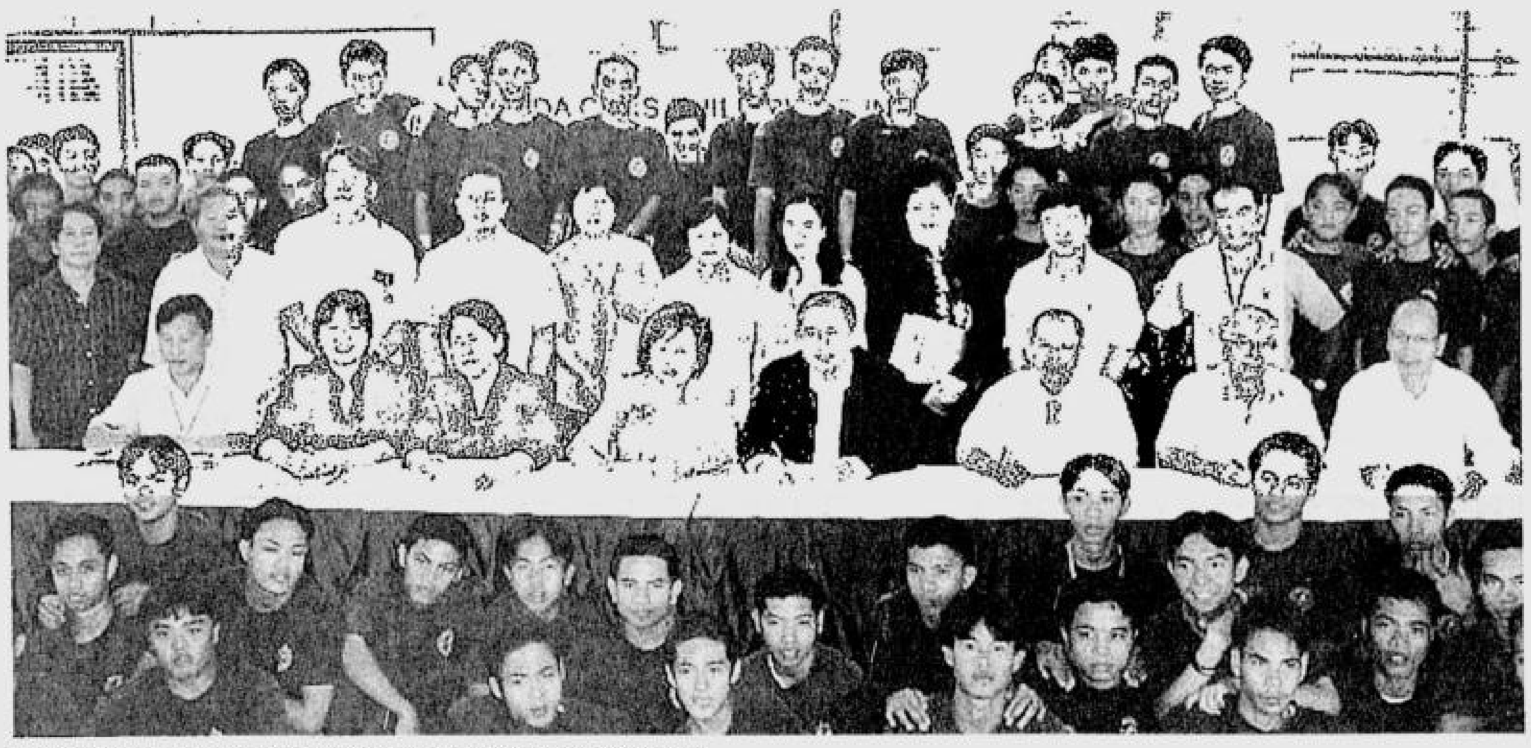
The Adaptive Technology for Rehabilitation, Integration, and Empowerment of the Visually Impaired (Atriev) announced that they are now training students for Access Technology in Popular Applications and for Medical Transcription and Call Center Operations, both five-month courses exclusively for blind and low-vision persons. The course in Access Technology in Popular Applications is designed for high school seniors and graduates who wish to learn how to use computers in pursuing regular collegiate courses. The Medical Transcription and Call Center Operations Courses, on the other hand, are for college graduates and undergraduates who want to pursue a financially rewarding career as medical transcriptionists or as call center representatives. Classes started Jan. 10.

Atriev president Antonio D. Llanes Jr, a blind pastor who introduced and propagated adaptive technology for visually impaired persons in the Philippines, said that he is especially encouraging young people with visual impairment to take advantage of these courses because information and communications technology (ICT) is key to more education, income-generation, and related opportunities for the visually impaired.

"Maybe our eyes cannot see, but our vision of equal opportunities for the visually impaired sector is crystal clear in our minds," said Carol Catacutan, Atriev's blind training director, writer, and journalist who has been a driving force behind Atriev's projects.

According to RG Sayson, Atriev executive director, its training programs are a vital part of Project Attrac (Adaptive Technology Training, Resource, and Access Center), which it is implementing in partnership with the Overbrook Nippon Network on Educational Technology (ON-NET), the Christian Blind Mission (CBM), the STI Foundation Leadership in Information Technology and Education (STI FLITE), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda). Project Attrac is also supported by the Department of Education through its Special Education Division under the Bureau of Elementary Education, the Wallace Business Forum, IBM Philippines, and Resources for the Blind, among others.

For more inquiries on Atriev, call Carolina Catacutan at 995-7336 or 438-9373, e-mail atriev@bayandsl.com, or visit Atriev at Room 407, STI College Cubao, Quezon City (along Edsa beside Farmers' Plaza).



HONDA RENEWS ITS CORPORATE COMMITMENT

A memorandum of agreement was recently signed by Honda Cars Philippines Inc (HCPI) and Jacobo Z. Gonzales Memorial School of Arts and Trade (JZGMSAT) in Biñan Laguna. As part of Honda's corporate social responsibility program, HCPI will support JZGMSAT by providing technical materials and training for the school's educational advancement and vocational development. Present during the simple signing ceremony were Rep. Uliran T. Joaquin of the 1st District of Laguna and Mitsunari Takano, president and GM of Honda Cars Philippines Inc. They were joined by Honda officers, Tesda officials, lawyer NR Joaquin, the faculty members and students of JZGMSAT. Shown (from left are Robert Niez, JZGMSAT administrator; Paz Urcia, Tesda Provincial Director; Susan de la Rama, Tesda Regional Director; Joaquin; Takano, and Honda officers Danny Pedro, Fred Magpayo and Arnel Doria.

VBL ROADSHOW DAVAO LEG

Work Casalme, project director of Virtual Business League and Mikel Garcia, youth spokesperson from Ateneo de Manila University, presents VBL to students and faculty members from Ateneo de Davao University. VBL is the Philippines' first and biggest interscholastic virtual gaming competition organized by the Philippine Electronic and Telecommunications Federation (Petef) Foundation. It will be participated in by major colleges and universities in Luzon, Cebu, and Davao. The tournament schedules are: semifinals-Jan. 28, and finals-Feb. 12. For more information, log on to www.petef.org.ph, or call Petef Foundation at 813-6398 or 759-3870, fax 813-6397.

BEDANS FINALIZE 2005 ALUMNI HOMECOMING PLANS

Representatives of the 2005 and 2006 Alumni Jubilee Batches of San Beda College recently presented updates on the upcoming 2005 Homecoming to Fr. Tarcisio Narciso OSB (Abbot-Chancellor), Fr. Pio Lomibao, OSB (Alumni Moderator) and former Fr. Rector and Alumni Director Benigno Benabarre, OSB. Upper left photo shows Fr. Tarcisio addressing the alumni batch reps, crediting them for their joint collaborative efforts. Upper right photo shows representatives of HS '55, HS '56, HS '60, HS '61, HS"65, HS '66, HS '70, HS '71, HS '75, HS '76, HS '80, HS '81 and HS '85, united for the common alumni homecoming project. All Bedan Alumni from the Grade School, High School, College of Arts and Sciences and College of Law, and from all anniversary years, are invited to join the fun and Bedan Fellowship of the 2005 Alumni Homecoming. The annual homecoming event, with its theme "Ang Pula. Ang Puti. Sa Mendiola Ang Uwi" will be held on Feb. 19 at the SBC Quadrangle, starting with an Alumni Mass at 6 p.m. For more information on the SBC Alumni Homecoming and to find out more about the whereabouts of your classmates, call Wilma Abellanosa at the SBC Alumni Association office at 735-5995 or 735-6011 local 2740. Bedans Come Home!

More PEP on pages B2-6, B2-7

Bits Clips

Pasig Catholic College homecoming

ALL PASIG Catholic College Alumni are invited to the Grand Alumni Homecoming on Feb 19 at the PCC grounds to be hosted by batch 1980. Registration starts at 5 p.m.

Cosmopoint founder in RP

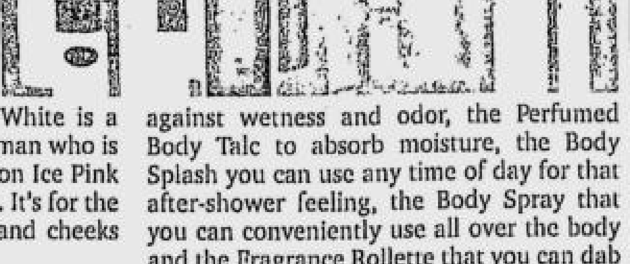
COSMOPOINT Institute of Information Technology (Malaysia) Founder Dato' Idrus Bin Mohd Satha graces the office blessing and inauguration of Cosmopoint's Philippine headquarters at Unit 303 Valero Plaza, 124 Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati today, Jan. 28, at 10 a.m., and a mini press conference will be held followed by the office blessing. The Cosmopoint founder and president holds a BSc degree in Computer Science and a Master's Degree in Computer Information System from the University of Evansville, Indiana. Driven by his strong belief in changing lives of people for the better through affordable education and continuous learning, Dato' Idras founded Cosmopoint in 1991 with just two employees and an office space of around 700 sq.ft. Cosmopoint has expanded its operations in all 16 states of Malaysia and has become the acknowledged leading IT education and multimedia institution in Malaysia. For more information, call 813-2056/57 or 893-9446 and look for Nica Hernandez, Janneth Culaway or Rene Aldeguer, or log on to www.cosmopoint.com.my.

Waltermart's 3-day sale

WALTERMART, your one-stop community shopping center, will be having a center-wide prosperity sale from Jan. 28 to 30. The 3-day sale, which will simultaneously take place in all branches of Waltermart Community Shopping Center, is perfectly timed for the coming Chinese New Year. Establishments within the center will participate in this weekend sale. Waltermart Makati has even opened four Digital Cinemas recently. Take advantage of discounts and special promos. Waltermart, known for convenient and great value shopping experience, will have special promos and discounts for customers on this day. Waltermart brances are located in E. Rodriquez, Quezon City; Pasong Tamo, Makati; Dasmariñas, Gen. Trias and Carmona in Cavite; Sta. Rosa and Calamba in Laguna; and Plaridel, Bulacan. Waltermart was established in the Philippines in 1992, actively participating in social development efforts designed to uplift the quality of life in the local community.

Product Files

Defining the scent of women



THERE are women who want to be more. It's a choice women make everyday. That's why Georgie on Ice gives women a choice to define their womanly scent.

Georgie on Ice Blue is for the woman who is comfortable with herself, and confident in her femininity. Georgie on Ice White is a clean, pure fragrance for the woman who is classy in her simplicity. Georgie on Ice Pink evokes the fragrance of romance. It's for the woman whose eyes are bright and cheeks flushed with love.

The line of Georgie On Ice fragrances carries a variety of forms: the Refreshing Body Wash that leaves skin fragrantly fresh, smooth, and will not dry skin nor leave any residue, the Skin Softening Hand and Body Lotion to keep your skin smooth and fresh-smelling, the Roll-On Anti-Perspirant Deodorant that provides underarm protection against wetness and odor, the Perfumed Body Talc to absorb moisture, the Body Splash you can use any time of day for that after-shower feeling, the Body Spray that you can conveniently use all over the body and the Fragrance Rollette that you can dab on in a carry-anywhere form.

The Georgie on Ice scents are available at Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines (formerly known as House of Sara Lee) and authorized Sara Lee dealers nationwide. For inquiries, call hotline 810-5402, or e-mail customer.relations@saraleedirect-selling.ph.

'GSIS Members' Hour' today

EVERYTHING about the Government Service Insurance System's (GSIS) pension program will take center stage as the pension fund's regular weekly show, the "GSIS Members' Hour", tackles this all-important issue on Friday, Jan. 28.

The "GSIS Members' Hour"-which airs from 6 to 7 p.m. on Fridays over NBN-4-has invited GSIS officials who will explain the various modes of retirement available to GSIS members.

Apart from these, the program will also discuss the issue of survivorship, or the pension program the GSIS extends to dependents of deceased GSIS pensioners.

Launched Jan. 7, "GSIS Members' Hour" serves as a venue for GSIS members to keep abreast with the ongoing reforms being initiated by GSIS President and General Manager Winston Garcia.

In the past weeks, the show had featured important GSIS reforms and issues such as the Premium-Based Policy, records reconciliation, and employees' compensation.

It has also lined up key GSIS topics for its future episodes, including the claims and loans interdependency policy (CLIP), the GSIS scholarship program, the GSIS housing loan program (called the Bahay Ko Program), and the GSIS eCard.

The "GSIS Members' Hour" has also opened communication lines where viewers can send in text or e-mail messages via 0919-4190610 (Smart), 0927-8494713 (Globe), or gsismail@gsis.gov.ph.

Garcia said the "GSIS Members' Hour" was produced in line with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's directive for government institutions to put in place direct feedback mechanisms for various public concerns.

The program is hosted by GSIS' Eric Zerrudo, lawyer Star Elamparo, and NBN's Toby Nebrida. Replays are aired every Saturday from 5 to 6 p.m.

Supremnet seminar taps Fil-Am market

THE SOCIETY of US-Philippine Real Estate Marketing Network (Supremnet) is holding a seminar-workshop that will reveal how real estate marketing professionals can effectively tap the $27-billion Filipino-American market in Waterfront Hotel Cebu City on Feb 18.

The seminar-workshop, which is being held regularly in Makati and in the United States for several years, will be conducted in Cebu City for the first time. Real estate developers and marketing professionals in Cebu City will learn how they can take advantage of the huge potential of the Filipino-American market in the United States.

Filipino-American Ed T. Pascual, a licensed California and Nevada real estate broker, will share the secrets for selling successfully to a diverse market and the strategies for opening up opportunities for those who develop, own, appraise, lend, buy or sell local properties.

A similar seminar-workshop will also be conducted in Makati on Feb. 4 at the AIM Conference Center. "Making Millions Selling to Filipino-Americans" will focus on how to effectively sell to Filipino-Americans using a system perfected by Supremnet and the "birddogs" (a term used for US-based real estate brokers and agents).

Pascual, author of the book "How to Profit from the $27-Billion Filipino-American Market," will also reveal how real estate developers, businessmen and other marketing professionals can take advantage of the outsourcing boom in the country. The selling system will show how marketing professionals can convince other Filipino-American professionals such as lawyers and CPAs to invest in local properties.

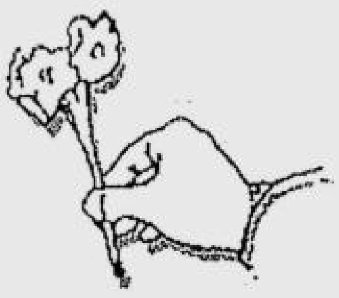
Local lawyers and certified public accountants (CPAs) are encouraged to attend, as the seminar will tackle how they can partner with Filipino-American lawyers and CPAs who want to outsource their legal and bookkeeping expertise and offer them to would-be immigrants.

Franchises, small- and medium-enterprises and other business opportunities that can be offered to Filipino-Americans will also be discussed. Attendees will be a given a chance to discuss their projects and prospects with Pascual and his other affiliates for possible marketing to Filipino-Americans in the United States.

Slots are limited. For reservations, call 812-4872, 812-3262 or 0919-8741962 or 0922-3361762 and look for Junz or Joy.

On his *EIGHT DEATH ANNIVERSARY,*

we lovingly remember



DADDY, *YOU ARE*
FOREVER *IN OUR HEARTS...*
SORELY MISSED *BY ALL OF US.*

ATTY. ROMEO REYES TICZON, SR.

(HUSBAND AND BEST FRIEND OF THE LATE ENCARNACION "NENA" LOVINA)

1997 GOLDEN SCROLL AWARDEE FOR MEDICINE AND ALLIED SCIENCES
(PARANGAL NG BAYAN AWARDS)

1997 GINTONG AMA AWARDEE (PARANGAL NG BAYAN AWARDS)

1997 GOLDEN LEADERSHIP AWARDEE FOR BUSINESS AND HERBAL MEDICINE
(SOCIAL ACTION & CIVIC MOVEMENT, INC.)

CORPORATE LAWYER, HERBAL SCIENTIST, AUTHOR OF ELEVEN (11) HERBAL MANUALS
AND ONE (1) HERBAL ENCYCLOPEDIA, REALTOR, PHILANTROPIST

who died in the Grace of our Lord on **January 29, 1997, 12:40 p.m.** *at the age of* **79**.

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches tomorrow, **January 29, 2005**:

St. Francis Parish Church .... ***6:00 AM***
Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish .... ***6:00 AM***
Doña J. Rodriguez St., New Manila, Quezon City

Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish .... ***6:15 AM***
McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City

St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Church .... ***6:15 AM***
Magallanes Village, Makati City

National Shrine of the Most Holy Rosary .... ***6:30 AM***
Sto. Domingo, Quezon City

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish .... ***6:30 AM***
Kalayaan, Bel-Air II, Makati City

Immaculate Concepcion Parish .... ***6:30 AM***
P. Burgos St., Antipolo, Rizal

Parish of Our Lady of Fatima .... ***6:30 AM***
Cor. Rodriguez Ave., & Capinpin St., Bangkal, Makati

Redemptorist Church .... ***6:45 AM***
Baclaran, Parañaque City

Malate Catholic Church .... ***7:00 AM***
2000 M.H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila

Sanctuario de San Jose .... ***7:15 AM***
Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

St. John Bosco Parish .... ***7:30 AM***
A. Arnaiz Avenue cor. Amorsolo St., Makati City

Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene .... ***5:00 PM***
Quiapo, Manila

Harrison Plaza Chapel .... ***5:30 PM***
2/F, Harrison Plaza Shopping City, Malate, Manila

Mary the Queen Parish .... ***6:00 PM***
Madison St., Greenhills, San Juan

Christ the King Parish .... ***6:00 PM***
Green Meadows Avenue, Quezon City

Our Lady of the Assumption Parish .... ***6:15 PM***
Asuncion St., Malate, Manila

Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace .... ***7:00 PM***
Our Lady of EDSA, Quezon City

The CHILDREN, IN-LAWS, GRANDCHILDREN and GREAT GRANDCHILDREN,

- ***JULIETA***
- ***ROMEO, JR.*** *and* ***LEONY DASCO*** *and their children ROSSANA and LITO, ARLENE, VINCENT, ADOLF, JULIUS, grandchildren RUTH, ISABEL*
- ***OPHELIA*** *and* ***BENNY T. CLEMENTE*** *and their daughters JACLYN, RACHELLE and SUZANNE*
- ***OTHELLO*** *and* ***LIZA ROÑO*** *and their children RAYMOND, DR. MA. LUISA, MILAGROS, MELISSA ANN, grandchildren TANYA ISABEL, ROMEO RODRIGO III, and MIGUELA ISABELLE.*
- ***BELEN*** *and* ***ANTONIO V. MARTEL, JR.*** *and their daughter ANTONIA*
- ***ROSSINA***
- ***LOURDES*** *and* ***EDGAR MARTIN*** *and their children MIGUEL, ANTONIO and DEIRDRÉ*
- ***PORTIA*** *and* ***RAMON B. SANTOS*** *and their children RAPHAEL, PAULINE and GABRIEL*
- ***RUBEN*** *(deceased),*

BROTHER, CONRADO,

BROTHERS IN LAW, *TEDDY H. LOVINA*
BERT ACOSTA and
NONIE M. LOVINA,

SISTERS IN LAW, *DING MATIAS Vda. de LOVINA*
SYLVIA RICARD-LOVINA
NING LOVINA-VILLAR
NORMA DE GUZMAN Vda de LOVINA
CHING LOVINA-ACOSTA
ISABEL VALLES-LOVINA and
MARYLOU PRIETO Vda. de LOVINA

WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND THEIR SINCEREST THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO KEEP HIM IN THEIR PRAYERS.

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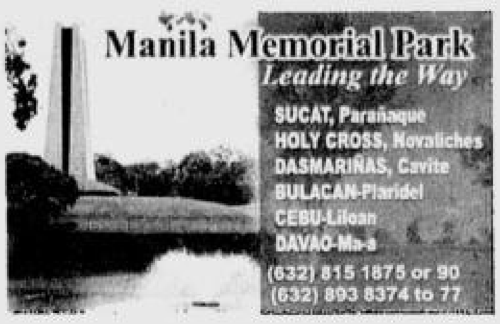
Manila Memorial Park
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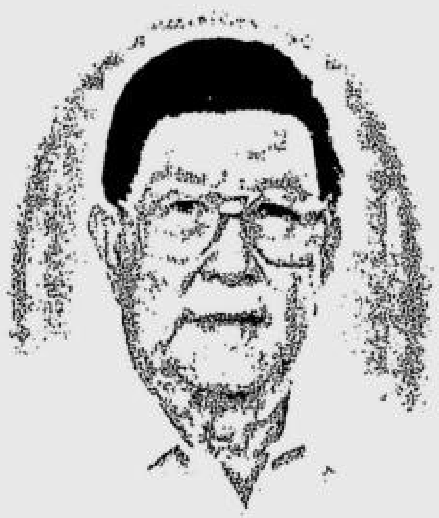
SUCAT, Parañaque
HOLY CROSS, Novaliches
DASMARIÑAS, Cavite
BULACAN-Plaridel
CEBU-Liloan
DAVAO-Ma-a
(632) 815 1875 or 90
(632) 893 8374 to 77

I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

2 Timothy 6:7



We,

GREGORIO TAN GANA
ROSALIA TG. GALICIA
EVELYN TG. JIMENEZ
EDITHA TAN GANA
BELINDA TG. CARIÑO
VICENTE J. TAN GANA, JR.,
MARCELINO A. TAN GANA,

the Members of the Board of Directors of

ST. FRANCIS HOMES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
TAGA – ARCE, INCORPORATED
DON VICENTE CONSTRUCTION, INC.,

announce with deep sorrow the demise of our

FOUNDING CHAIRMAN & PRESIDENT,

Engr. FRANCISCO MIRANDA TAN GANA

(April 2, 1911 – January 22, 2005)

of Biñan, Laguna.

We request the pious readers to join us in praying for his eternal repose. His remains lie in state at the family residence at 61 Gen. Capinpin St., San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna. Interment will be on Sunday, January 30, 2005 at the Family Mausoleum, Eternal Gardens after the 1:00 P.M. Mass at the San Isidro Labrador Parish Church, Biñan, Laguna.

In Loving Memory

of

TERESITA MARCELO VIRATA

Died in the peace of our Lord
on Jan. 26, 2005 at the age of 59.

She is survived by her husband, **Melquiades "Coy" Virata III**; children: **Gary & Rissa**; brother and sisters: **Ernie & Flery Marcelo, Linda & Resty Tiangco, Rosie & Roy (†) Papa**; in laws: **Merle & Mandy Sanchez, Vicky, Marie & John Halloran, Butch & Leona Virata, Rufy & Bambi Virata, Conch & Marc Choate, Claire** and **Agnes**; nephews and nieces and other relatives and friends.

Her remains lie in state at Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills. Interment will be on Saturday, January 29, 2005 at Tugatog Malabon Cemetery following the one o'clock Mass.

Please omit flowers. In lieu of these, donations to the MEL AND TESS SCHOLARSHIP FUND, will be appreciated.

MESSAGE OF THANKS

For visiting us and being with us
in our time of sorrows...
For praying with us and for us...
For the Mass cards and messages
of sympathy and condolence...
For the beautiful flowers to express
compassion...
For joining us in our nightly vigil...
For attending the masses and funeral rites...
For thinking of us in our grief...
For all that you have done to console
our hearts...

Our sincerest gratitude.

From the Family of the late

CAMILO ("Miling")
DIOSO ENRIQUEZ SR.,

93 years old
A 1932 H.S. Ateneo Graduate
October 13, 1911 – January 20, 2005
Widower of the late
Librada D. Machica-Enriquez
Padre Burgos Street, Sabang District,
Tacloban City, Leyte

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

FIDEL C. CABUENA

Retired DILG Provincial Chief
Oriental Mindoro
FIRST BATCH, PACD

His bereaved wife **NENE**; children **GINA, BONG, CHUCHI** and **DINDO**, their spouses, grandchildren and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 30 January 2005 at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." ***John 11:25-26***

MARTINA C. PIEDAD

of Balnoan La Union and Cabanatuan City
went to be with the Lord on January 27, 2005
at the age of 95.

Her bereaved children **AURORA PIEDAD-ELY GARCIA, ZENAIDA-MARCELINO MAGDANGAL**; brothers and sister **DR. JOSE F. CALDERON, FELICISIMA C. DIAZ, ELIEZAR CALDERON**; grandchildren **ERNALYN & EREN BAUTISTA**; great grandchildren **JEREN BAUTISTA, ZENAIDA PRANADA MAGDANGAL (†), JOSEPHINE GALANG; LYDIA ALVARADO, ANTONIO MAGDANGAL & MARCELINO MAGDANGAL SR.**, request their friends and relatives to join them in giving praise and thanksgiving to GOD for the wonderful life of **NANAY MARTINA**. "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Memorial services will be held on Friday, January 28, 2005 at 6:00 o'clock p.m. at the UNITED METHODIST CITY TEMPLE where lies now the body.

Interment will follow after the January 29, 2005, Saturday necrological service at UNITED METHODIST CITY TEMPLE corner del Pilar St., & Sanciangco St., Cabanatuan City.

She will be interred at the Old Cabanatuan City Public Cemetery. The family wish to express their deepest appreciation to all who sympathize with them in their hour of bereavement.

ATELA E. ARAGO

"TELA"

has peacefully joined her Creator on January 25, 2005
at the age of 63.

Her beloved husband **Ex-Mayor Joel E. Arago MD**; children **Sarah & Jojo, Karen & Roe**; grandchildren **Eljo, Joela, Jewel, Nicole & Meg**; sisters & brothers-in-law **Jocelyn & Richard, Elly & Sixto**; nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Her remains lie in state at their residence: Convento St., Lopez, Quezon.

Interment will be on January 30, 2005, 1:30 p.m. at Nuestra Señora del Pilar Memorial Park, Lopez, Quezon.

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3-A Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City; Tel. 890-63-18

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Forbes Park, Makati City;
Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223

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Magallanes Village, Makati City;
Tels. 852-8228; 852-7284

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Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044

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1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila;
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CLASSIFIEDS

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

January 26, 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Contract Code : Sp04.ACSPHO.Le-0036
   Title : Design, Supply, Installation, Test and Commissioning of Air Conditioning System for the TransCo Head Office Building.
   Location : Quezon Ave., Cor., Agham Rd., Diliman, Quezon City
   Contract Duration : One Hundred Fifty (150) Calendar Days
2. The works to be completed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all superintendence, labor, materials, supplies, tools and equipment, to complete the Design, Supply, Installation, Test and Commissioning of the New Air Conditioning System for the TransCo Head Office Building in accordance with the Plans and Specifications. The work scope also includes decommissioning and dismantling of some components of the existing air-conditioning system.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid is **FORTY FIVE MILLION EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTY SIX THOUSAND SIXTY PESOS (PhP 45,886,060.00)** from the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) of National Transmission Corporation (TransCo).
4. Application for Eligibility is open to experienced contractors that have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract/project to be bid with the following License and Registration Particulars:
   License : "Category B – Specialty: Air-Conditioning System"
   Registration : "Medium A – Specialty: Air-conditioning System"
5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by Transco in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
6. Eligibility Documents and Forms will be available for **January 28, 2005**, at the Bids and Contracts Management Department, National Transmission Corporation, Ground Floor, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City 1104 Telefax No.: 921-23-08, Email: rvalejandro@transco.ph upon presentation of Letter of Intent, Contractor's License and a payment of non-refundable fee of Php 1,000.00 per copy.
7. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before **February 14, 2005**, and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
8. Contractors, not yet included in the TransCo's List of Registered Contractors, who wish to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility checking are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A Certificate of Registration will be issued to contractors upon approval.
   - ✓ Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - ✓ Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - ✓ Taxpayer's Identification Number
   - ✓ Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by the Government or any of its agencies, offices, corporations and LGUs, including non-inclusion in the Consolidation Blacklisting Report issued by the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB).
   - ✓ Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt of payment.
   - ✓ Contractor's License.
9. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids or request for registration without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. The Contract to be bid shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
11. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) GUILLERMO R. REDOBLADO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – January 28, 2005)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : **February 22, 2005**, 2:00 PM, Solarium Hall, Building-1, Ground Floor NPC-Head Office, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding for the sale of the following items:

ITEM	DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION	MIN. BID PRICE
	SCHEDULE-I: Simultaneous Public Bidding at NPC Baguio Office and at NPC Head Office, Diliman, Quezon City	
-1-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable Items consisting of junk Heavy Equipment (Bulldozer, Grader, Dump-Truck, Pay-Loader, Fork-Lift and Bus-body) and used General Plant Parts and discarded Office Equipment. Located at Ambuklao Hydro-Electric Power Plant, Bokod Town, Benguet Province.	P575,300.00 per lot
-2-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable and junk Vehicles consisting of Two (2) units Passenger Bus (SAN-307 / SDG-267). One (1) unit Toyota L/C Jeep (SAN-309). One (1) unit Isuzu Pick-up (SCC-456) and dilapidated/totally junk Ford-Fiera. Located at Ambuklao Hydro-Electric Power Plant, Bokod Town, Benguet Province.	P175,000.00 per lot
-3-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable items consisting of Electrical Cables assorted types, sizes and lengths, Junk Heavy Equipment (3 units Dump Truck) and discarded / used items, including expired chemicals, old records, cartons and newspapers). Located at Binga Hydro-Electric Power Plant, Itogon Town, Benguet Province.	P729,000.00 per lot
	SCHEDULE-II: NPC Head Office, Solarium, Diliman, Quezon City.	
-1-	One (1) lot: Unserviceable, junk and scrap items consisting of used General Plant Parts and Office Equipment, Guest House Furnishings, Motor Pool and Laboratory parts. Located at Magat River HEP in Brgy. Aguinaldo, Ramon Town, Isabela Province.	P862,000.00 per lot
-2-	One (1) lot: Barite, consisting of 4,114 bags, 100 lbs/bag. Located at Mak-Ban Geothermal Power Plant, Bay Town, Laguna Province.	P261.00 per bag

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S/CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN 2003 ORIGINAL (OR CERTIFIED XEROX COPY) FOR THE BIDDER OR AN AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT (ORIGINAL) OF THE COMPANY

All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms for this public bidding must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00 / Schedule from Mr. S.V. Lomuntad, Jr. / Mr. Al Plata at MMD, Ground Floor, Bldg.-1, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. Bidders for Schedule-I may secure the Bid Forms at Upper Agno Project Office, Plaza Natalia Bldg., Naguilian Road, Baguio City. Deadline for issuance of the bid forms is until 4:30 PM, February 21, 2005.

For the Materials Management Department
FELIX B. TACATA, JR.
OIC, MMD

(PDI – Jan. 27, 28 & 29, 2005)

PRISM
PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY PLANNING

Unit 1905, 19th Floor,
Galleria Corporate Center
EDSA Ortigas, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 3972359 to 65
Fax Nos. 3972360 / 3972365
Email: bac@prism.org.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

for the Supply and Installation of Various IT Hardware*

The Private Sector Mobilization for Family Planning (PRISM), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified local bidders/contractors apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and Installation of Various IT Hardware.

A complete set of bidding documents may be obtained by the eligible bidder starting January 31, 2005 to February 4, 2005 at the PRISM office, Unit 1905 Galleria Corporate Center, EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave., Q.C. For further details, please contact IT Specialist Marcial R. Basco at Tel.No. 397-2364.

Pre-Bid conference will be on February 7, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at the PRISM conference room, Unit 1906 Galleria Corporate Center, EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave., Quezon City.

Deadline for submission and opening of Technical and Price Proposal will be on February 14, 2005, 1:00 p.m. at the PRISM conference room, Unit 1906 Galleria Corporate Center, EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave., Quezon City. Late submission and/or incomplete bid documents will no longer be accepted.

PRISM reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formalities therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposal as evaluated is most advantageous to the Project.

PRISM also assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that any award will be made.

* All equipment should be manufactured in the US

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – January 28, 2005)

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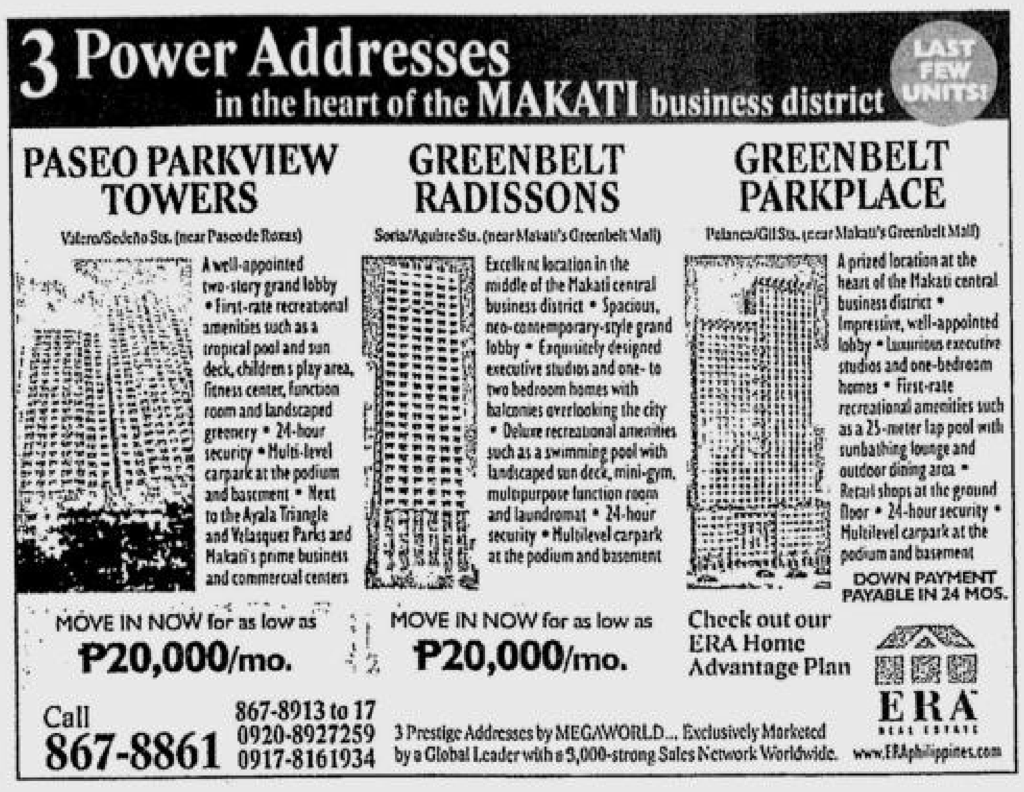

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"Most Outstanding Memorial Park"
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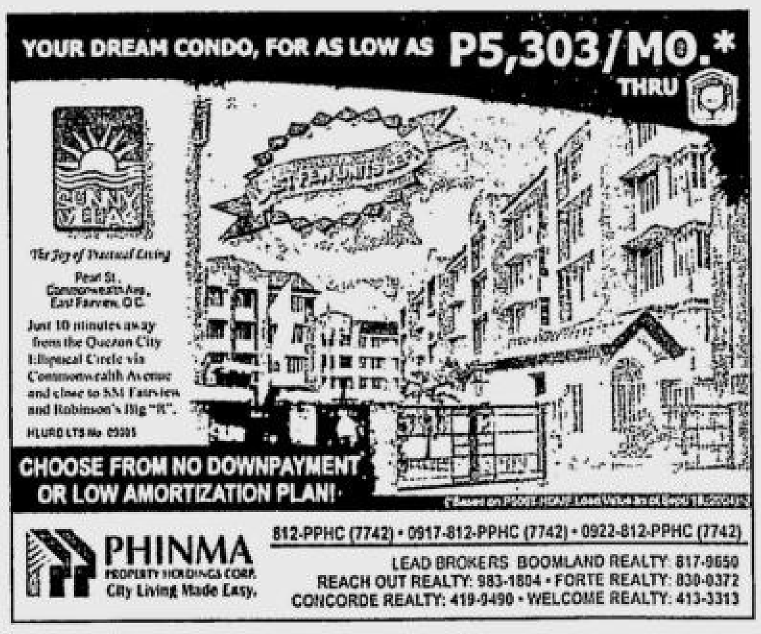

YOUR DREAM CONDO, FOR AS LOW AS **P5,303/MO.*** THRU

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Pearl St. Commonwealth Ave. East Fairview, Q.C.
Just 10 minutes away from the Quezon City Elliptical Circle via Commonwealth Avenue and close to SM Fairview and Robinson's Big "R".
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HOUSEHOLD

LIPAT BAHAY

L-BAHAY 9200784 4540520

Cheap 9260424/09272207960

L-BAHAY 8383742/09208440984

P1200/TRIP 742-14-57

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Commercial near Business District
Vacant Lot or with Old Structure
One (1) Hectare more or less.
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3Sty w/Roof Comm'l Bldg. 161m² Sani 6457251 09209129092 D.B.O.

COMML/RESDL

PASIG

PRIME PROPERTY
418sqm 5Dr 2Sty Apt. infrnt of Pamantasan ng Lunsod ng Pasig 09189422422•09178212826

QUEZON CITY

'Kamias #11 K-I cor K-6th NEW ' 9210255 9219967 9209822

L635 corlot BelAir Makati
L604 corlot V.Luna QC 20t/m²
L100 Proj.8 QC T-payment
L475 Cong.AvQC 9208376 DB

HOUSE & LOT

MANILA

SN ANDRES MANILA Bnew Twnhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge P3.355M up 8903461 loc 34

MARIKINA

Bnew 4BR 3TB 2.6M 9487112

PARANAQUE

LA1800m² 8223346/8219948

QUEZON CITY

FILINVEST II Q.C. 280m²-LA 350m²-FA P4M RUSH 4BR 4TB 2-sty 6319877 / 09178999797

Proj.8 2Stry S.Pool 1028m² Sani 6457251 09209129092

Rush! West Triangle P8M LA507 FA240 4br 5tb mdsrm 3car grge garden 411-7571 453-0106 Mr./Mrs. Felicio

W.Plains 600m² 5BR 15M 4121825 / 09177914366

RIZAL

Brookside Cainta 278m² 4br 2tb w/Grge 09173900948 • 09177870627

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STA. MARIA 225T 9372688

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MAKATI

1.2M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 4Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mkti 0917-8313226

1.3M Nr D Fort
2-4br RFO Bnew Comp. Amenities No DP 10T/mo 0% int 5yrs Flex Terms 0927-4630047

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Nr Rockwell Penthse 2sty 9M 3BR 4121825;09177914366

RENT 2 OWN 10K 2br Nr Mkti 0922-8086855

Rockwell 183m² 2BR 14.5M 147m² 2BR 12.5M 412-1825

MANILA

CONDO APT w/grg 5636296

INVESTMENT PROP - Nr UST 250 sqm 6 Drs 8M 6341212

NR LA SALLE TAFT BnewTwnhse/4sty/3br/3tb/mdsrm/grge/deck P3.610M up 8903461

HOUSE & LOT

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The Metro Homes Division of:
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TROPICAL CHERRY HOUSE MODEL
132 sqm. usable floor area • 5 BR • 2 T&B • Balcony • Carport

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MANDALUYONG

CONDO,BNEW, RFO 09192189817

PARANAQUE

HARD TO BEAT P10Th DP for STARTer HOMES Savvy 25 nr SM Bicutan, Paranaque Employed, Self Employed, Professionals, Businessmen OFWs, Pag-ibig members or not OK RIN Townhaus 20sqm@P650-850Th P5.5T to P8/mo; up to 20yrs 833-7093; 834-6841 & 42

PASIG

KAPITOLYO 5br 5tb 2prkg P11M 7460237/09178125791

RUSH SALE CAMBRIDGE 40m² LOFT 250Tdp 9Tmo del '06 CEL # 09178230846 HANNAH

QUEZON CITY

ALPHA VICTORIA NEW MLA LA116 FA236 8M 634-1212

BRAND NEW PROJECT 4 2STOREY W/ ATTIC 637-4316

CUBAO P1.5M Flexible Terms Offsetting OK 09178348080

SCT TUAZON 2.3M 4163101

TEACHER'S VILL QC Brandnew 18 Mahabagin St 9132701 / 09189356306

LOT

LAS PINAS

PHILAM LA694 P7500 / m² AL 874-1465 / 0918-937-2571

QUEZON CITY

Ayala Hillside 682m² 754m² @ 21,500 /m² 4121825. 09177914366

CHESNUT ST FAIRVIEW QC 720sqm @ P6400/sqm
DON JOSE HEIGHTS QC 400sqm @ P5900/sqm
Text / Call 0920-9006867

LOT

QUEZON CITY

KATIPUNAN EXT COM'L beside future Kenny Rogers 1,100m² & 451m²@P9.5th/m² 454-5667 / 0918-9235216

LOYOLA GRAND VILLAS choice lots w/ view, Sweden Street available 426-5650, 929-1832 • 0919-8212235

WEST TRIANGLE HOMES QC 434.3sqm w/old house
SACRED HEART VIL-7 QC Near SM Fairview 300-1200 Sqm (02)-4110357 0917-5140323

PROVINCIAL

★100% TAGAYTAY ★ 240m²-up 3,560/m² 134T D/P 6 Mos to pay 6T Mo. nr Taal Vista 6600372

RUSH SALE!!! Hilltop Subd Cabanatuan City 2Adjcnt lots nr Doctors hosp & NE Pacific Mall 315sqm and 319sqm 0919-6308089/0920-9202508

OTHER PROVINCIAL

5ha Good for Subdivision Magarao C Sur P150/m² 0437785373 C-09184204333

ATIMONAN QUEZON Resort Lots 150m² @ 3000/m² 09184204333/T0437785373

BAGUIO BOKAWAN RD 428 SQM 14M 0465156420 09173730799 CECIL

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

ALABANG

125 Banaba St Ayala Alabang 5BR•6TB fully furnished w/pool & tel All AC incl. sala & dining masters BR w/ sala & TB. See to appreciate M F

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

BAYVIEW INTERNATIONAL TOWERS
JUST A 10 MINUTE DRIVE TO THE AIRPORT!!!

PROMO
29,000/sq.m.
3Bedroom
165.5sq.m.
w/ 2 parking slots
P 4.9M

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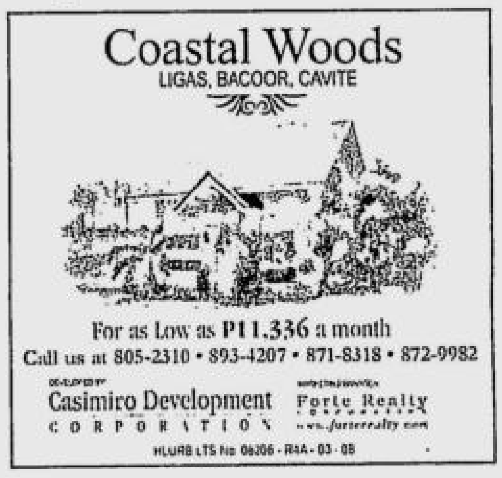

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REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

FOR LEASE

OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE
Jacinta Bldg. 2 (formerly 3M House)
EDSA, Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City

Ground Floor	385 sq.m.
Second Floor	575 sq.m.
Third Floor	454 sq.m.
Fourth Floor	454 sq.m.
Sixth Floor	454 sq.m.

Please call Tel. No. 882-1258/882-1213

HOUSE

PARANAQUE

MARIMAR 3BR 2TB Grg nr SM Bic Wtr Ok 823-2885

4BR 3TB NR SM BCTAN 19T 2 GARAGE BONG 09178571049

APARTMENT

MAKATI

2br 2STY APT Strong H'O P8.5K. Pls Call 757-7442

MANILA

561-0960 0920-4136412 AJ 5,500 - 7,000 New Built House

QUEZON CITY

103 Ilocos St Bago Bantay QC Call Lovely 455-1692

FOR LEASE

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FOUR SEASONS SALCEDO
luxuriously and elegantly furnished 2 BR, 3 BR units & 2 and a Den 8935788 / 8168381 / 8125577
Brokers welcome

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Mla, Daily, Wkly 7110079

Pasig Rm Ldy 3500 0919-5674519

BEDSPACE

Nw studio lady 3.5T 9137513

BUSINESS RENTAL

AYALA AVE 8181096/7586

CUBAO Shp 500m² 25T 7257342

Dental Clinic For Sale/Lease Rm224 Atrium Bldg Makati •811-4071/823-6047•

LOAN & MORTGAGE

BUSINES DOCTOR 524-3197

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Francisco Gold Bldg I 73.60m² 121 All-in 4121825. 09177914366

Ortigas Ctr 70 145 300 1200m 412-1825 / 0917-7914366

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL

260m² w/5 Offices 5487 Boyle St, Palanan Mkti 804-0067

CONDO/TWHSE/ FOR SALE/RENT

MARBELLA I Roxas Blvd nr DFA Studio 55m² semifurn 0916-2177493/045-5995747

ALABANG

AYALA ALABANG 2 STOREY HSE 3 BR WTB 2 CAR GARAGE WMD & DRVR QRTR T 8232226 - 09178264250

PARANAQUE

ROXAS BLVD PACIFIC COAST PLAZA 3BRWTB WIPKNG SLOT T 8232226 - 09178268250

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

FORD

'04RS LYNX All Power 580T 0927-9380331 RUSH SALE

HONDA

'01 Civic VTis A/T, FLD w/Amp. Sub-woofer, In-dash 7"TV w/DVD player, New Tires 510T neg 0915-5639302 Cris

HYUNDAI

•99 STAREX 9str. 6450515•

MERCEDES

92 W 1900 MB 8092022

MITSUBISHI

GLXI 95" WEEL MAINTAINED NOTHING TO FIX 2727813

NISSAN

•98 VANETTE LOC. 6450515•

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Pajero Town-Lite-Hi-Ace Delica Serena etc 7127539

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

CARS/VANS/BRIDAL 8969956

MB 7415897•09208328657

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Toyco U Drive w/ Driver All Kinds Cars Van Revo Dly. Wk.Mo. Rental 8023021-22

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1.5% Car Loan 5344441

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0361

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1:5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

NOTICE

www.poea.gov.ph
is the official website of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

POEA does not endorse all other websites that have "poea" in their respective domain names and have links to other websites offering overseas jobs.

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/out taking car 5315577

2% w/out taking car 6567685

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUY/SELL

College Plans 0917-7939632

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT
ELITE PIANO CENTER
Almost New:TERMS-7213124

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-2050952

LAB CHAMPLINE 4114631

LABRADOR PUPS by PH CH Ransom P9T • 0915-5337060

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7220433 • 4123543

MISCELLANEOUS

Cre Crd Csh Advans 9474129

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of late Hilario Lao-Ing aka Luciano Hilario C. Lao-Ing was extrajudicially settled by the heirs with Special Power of Attorney as per Doc. 219 Page 36 Book 478 Series 2005 before Notary Public Jose L. Ma. Santos of Quezon City.
PDI-Jan. 14, 21 & 28, 2005

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE is hereby given of the loss of PLATE # PVY-282 owned by EVELYN SENORAN.
(PDI-Jan. 28, Feb. 4 & 11, 2005)

PERSONAL

ST. JUDES NOVENA
May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored and glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred heart of Jesus pray for us. St. Jude, worker of miracles pray for us. St. Jude helper of the hopeless pray for us. Say this prayer 9 times a day for 9 days. By the 9th day, your prayer will be answered. Publication must be promised. MEI

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

RTW Consign 09167940002

Work Thru Phone 09192235381

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

★MARKETING ASST.★
Col Grad 20-22 yrs old 8175511 Txt or Call 0919-2401280 8944950

WANTED DENTIST OPTOMETRIST FEMALE 9362115

MALE/FEMALE

BSP•BSN•PT•MT
Any Allied Health Grads up to P45T/ Mo! 8922818

Lady Dentist UE Graduate
Pref 2003-04 Board Passer
0917-9039839 / 682-0166

The USAID-funded PRISM project is recruiting for the positions listed here below. All positions are based in the Philippines and employment will be given on a one-year contract subject to renewal. PRISM is a project that aims to mobilize private sector involvement in the provision of family planning products and services.

Policy Specialist. Mid-level professional with work experience on policy interventions addressing population and family planning issues. Applicant with an adequate and clear understanding of the policy development process at the company level in the business and pharmaceutical sectors and of regulatory policies of government that influence integration of FP services in the private practice of medical professionals is preferred.

Workplace Manager for Mindanao. Mid-level professional with experience in implementing workplace programs. Residents of Davao are preferred. Applicant should be willing to work with different partner agencies and business associations. The Workplace Manager will be responsible for supporting the implementation of workplace component activities in Mindanao.

Business Development Specialist. Mid-level professional with experience in the development and implementation of strategic business development plans and programs. Applicant should have a good knowledge of the Philippine healthcare industry.

Grants Assistant. Junior-level professional with at least 3 years experience in sub-contracting and grants-making process, namely pre-solicitation, solicitation, review and selection, pre-award, award, and post-award stages. Applicant with knowledge and understanding of USAID procurement regulations and policies is preferred.

Interested applicants should e-mail their application letter and CV at jobs@prism.org.ph on or before 4th of February 2005.

An exclusive Marketing Real Estate Company based in Makati is in need of

FULL TIME PROPERTY SPECIALISTS!

- Outgoing / Self-driven / Result-oriented individual
- 25-35 yrs old Male / Female
- College degree holder
- Experience in real estate is an advantage
- Fresh graduates are welcome
- Willing to undergo training
- Can start immediately

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS WILL RECEIVE:

- Basic salary with employment benefits
- Generous commission rates
- Full marketing support
- Cash and non-cash incentives

Call for an appointment Now!
Look for Edwin Bernadas
Cellfone: 0919-4262946
Trunkline: 886-0000

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that Stock Certificate No. M197B representing one (1) proprietary share in Sta. Elena Golf Club, Inc. owned by Philips Semiconductors Philippines, Inc. has been lost.

(PDI--Jan. 28, Feb. 4 & 7, 2005)

RA Form No. 10.1 (LCRO)

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province of Rizal
Municipality of Cainta

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Act No. 9048, notice is hereby served to the public that Maricris Cuenca Singh has filed with this Office a petition for change of name from Kulwindeer Kuar to Kulwinder Kaur in the birth certificate of Kulwindeer Kuar Singh who was born on March 26, 1998 at Cainta, Rizal and whose parents are Hardeep Singh and Maricris L. Cuenca.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than January 23, 2005

(Sgd.) RIZALINO P. TIMBOL
Municipal Civil Registrar

(PDI - Jan. 19 & 28, 2005)

SEND YOUR RESUMÉS INSTANTLY

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7th FLOOR LEGASPI TOWERS 200 PASEO DE ROXAS, CITY OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA
TELEPHONE NUMBERS 817-47-11 • 817-47-12 • 817-47-13
817-5017 • 817-5018 • 817-5014 • 817-1441/46
FAX (632) 815-2652 • 815-2660 • 817-3127
ZIP CODE 1226

INVITATION TO BID

The **PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY (PRA)** formerly known as the ***PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY (PEA)*** is inviting interested parties to participate in the public bidding for the lease of about 1.71 hectares for mixed use purposes and landscape development of about 6.86 hectares of its property known as the ***ESPLANADE***, located at the west end (Bay side) of the Central Business Park I – Island A (CBP I-A) Bay City, Pasay City.

Qualified participants are:

1.) Any Filipino citizen of legal age,
2.) Any partnership, association or corporation, public or private, of which at least 60% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is created and organized under the laws of the Philippines.

Interested parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 in cash or Manager's Check starting on January 17, 2005 until February 18, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the office of the Secretariat, PRA Real Estates Bids and Award Committee (PREBAC) 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo De Roxas, Makati City.

Further information, inquiries may be made to the PREBAC in the above address with telephone numbers 817-4711 to 817-4713 (trunklines).

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI--Jan. 7, 11, 19, 28, Feb. 3 & 7, 2005)

URGENT NEED!

OFFICE SALES PERSONNEL

- CANDIDATE MUST BE FEMALE, WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN ANY COMPUTER FIELD OR EQUIVALENT
- WITH GOOD MORAL CHARACTER
- NOT MORE THAN 26 YEARS OLD
- GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- NEWLY GRADUATES ARE WELCOME

INTERESTED CANDIDATES MAY SEND RESUMÉ AT: #449 BULALAKAW ST., PLAINVIEW, MANDALUYONG CITY near MANDALUYONG CITY HALL. Tel. # 747-6428 / 31 or e-mail us at @egccwi@pldtsi.net

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PSALM
POWER SECTOR
ASSETS & LIABILITIES
MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (*"PSALM"*) Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee (*"Committee"*) invites interested parties to participate in and bid for the privatization of the following:

Cebu II Diesel Power Plant Equipment, Components, Auxilliaries and Accessories located at Barrio Talavera, Toledo City, Cebu

(the *"Asset"*). The Asset is being sold on an *"as is where is"* basis.

Interested parties are required to submit a Letter of Interest (*"LOI"*) to PSALM which shall state the full name, address, telephone and fax number of the interested party, name of the principal contact, and signed by an authorized representative. All LOIs must be received by PSALM at the PSALM Office, 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, not later than 5:00 p.m. on February 8, 2005 (the *"LOI Submission Deadline"*). Only interested parties that submit an LOI by the LOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the privatization of the Asset.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of the Bidding Package, interested parties shall execute a Confidentiality Agreement and an Undertaking pursuant to Section 78 of RA 9136, in the forms provided by PSALM, and pay a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Hundred U.S. Dollars (U.S. $500.00) (the *"Participation Fee"*). The Participation Fee shall either be in cash, manager's check or cashier's check. All bank charges, if any, shall be for the account of the interested party.

The Bidding Package shall be issued during office hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) from January 26, 2005 until February 9, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. (the "Deadline") at the PSALM Office. Only interested parties who have been issued the Bidding Package will be allowed to participate further in the privatization of the Asset.

The schedule of the bidding activities shall be as follows:

Due Diligence	*January 27 to February 28, 2005*
Pre-bid Conference	*February 17, 2005*
Deadline for Receipt of Bids by PSALM	*March 15, 2005*

A single stage two-envelope bidding system has been adopted. Other details of the privatization of the Asset are contained in the Bidding Package. References to dates and times in this notice shall be based on Manila time. Should any of the above dates fall on a holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the same time of the immediately succeeding business day in Makati City.

Interested parties will be required to post a bid security equivalent to ten percent (10%) of its total bid price in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit, confirmed by a local bank and acceptable to the Committee. The bid security of the winning bidder shall be substituted by a performance security to guarantee prompt, faithful and complete performance of its obligations under the transaction.

Letters of Interest, Confidentiality Agreements and Undertakings shall be addressed and submitted to: The Chairman, Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee, PSALM Corporation, 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines. Inquiries and clarifications shall be addressed to Mr. Froilan A. Tampinco at the PSALM Office or at telephone number (632) 893-8202, fax number (632) 8405341 or e-mail address fatampinco@psalm.gov.ph.

The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any interested party or bidder or proposals or bids therefrom, or any part thereof, and/or to waive any defects contained therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government, without offering any reason whatsoever. It does not assume any obligation to compensate or indemnify any party for any expense or loss that they may incur as a result of their participation in the privatization process, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made. Finally, it reserves the right to modify, supplement, or change the Bidding Procedures and other aspects of the privatization process at any time, including the schedule and the venue provided herein, for any reason whatsoever and without giving prior notice. Interested parties and/or bidders will be notified subsequently of such modifications, supplements, or changes.

(Sgd.) **VINCENT S. PEREZ, JR.**
Chairman
PSALM Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 26, 27 & 28, 2005)

NFA releases rice for Food-for-School program

THE NATIONAL Food Authority has delivered some 37,097 bags of rice to different schools in Metro Manila for the Food-for-School program of the Department of Education (DepEd).

Launched in November 2004, the Food-for-School program rewards Grades 1 and 2 pupils from various public schools with a kilogram of iron-fortified NFA rice for every day they attend school until the end of classes in March. The children are given food coupons at the end of each class which they will exchange for rice.

The program aims to alleviate hunger of some 50,000 school children from different public schools identified by the DepEd in Metro Manila, Cavite and Bulacan.

NFA Administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. said that through the Food-for-School program, school children would be motivated to go to school because of the NFA rice being awarded to them at the end of the school day.

Meanwhile, Tan said the food agency continues to sell iron-fortified rice at P21 per kilogram through its accredited rice outlets nationwide.

For more inquiries, suggestions and complaints, the public may send text messages via the Text NFA Program to 0917-6210927.

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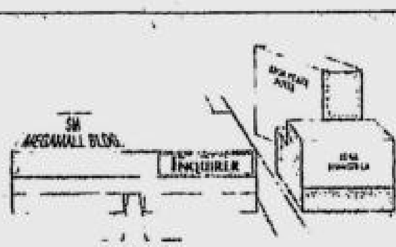

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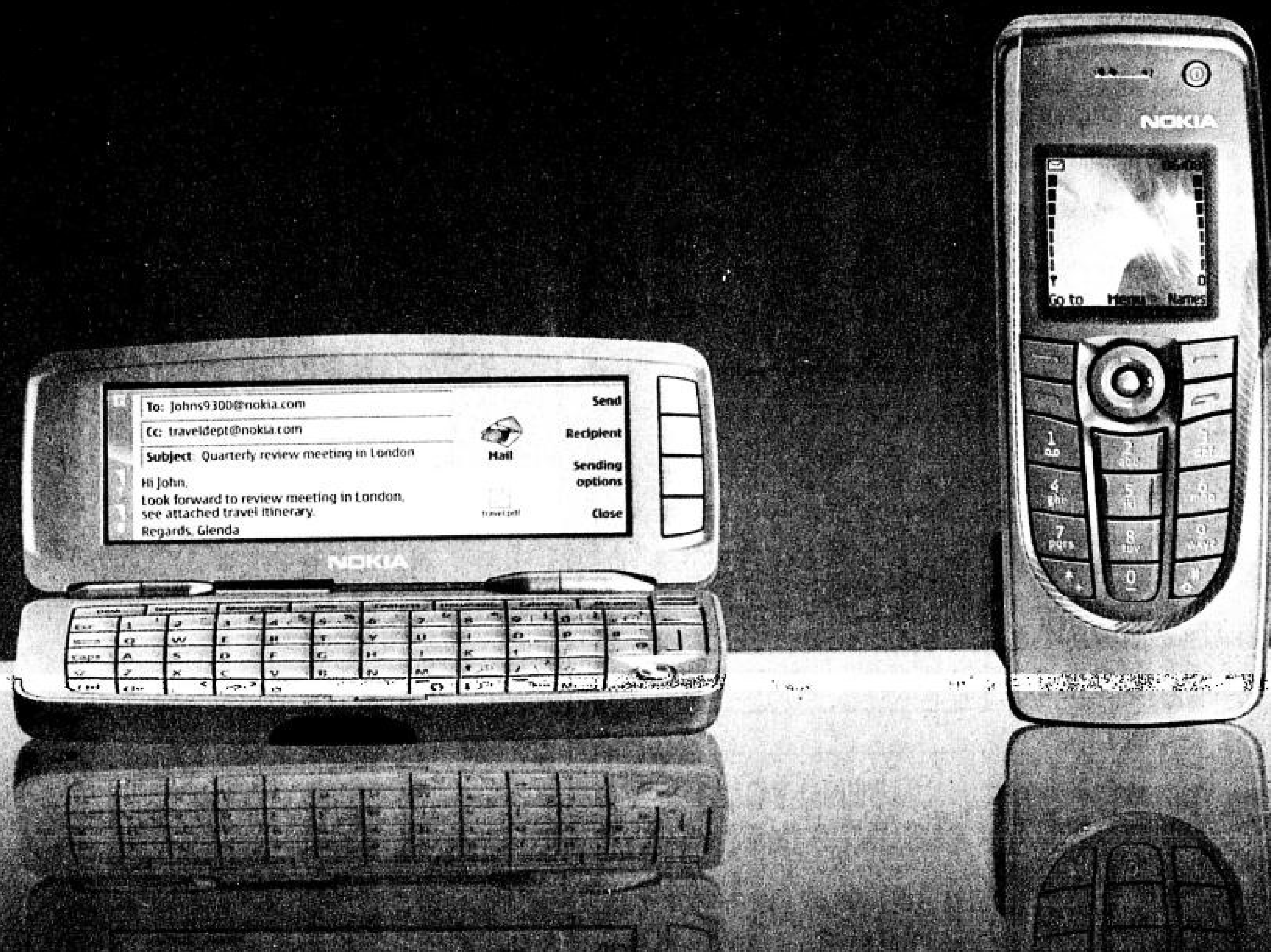
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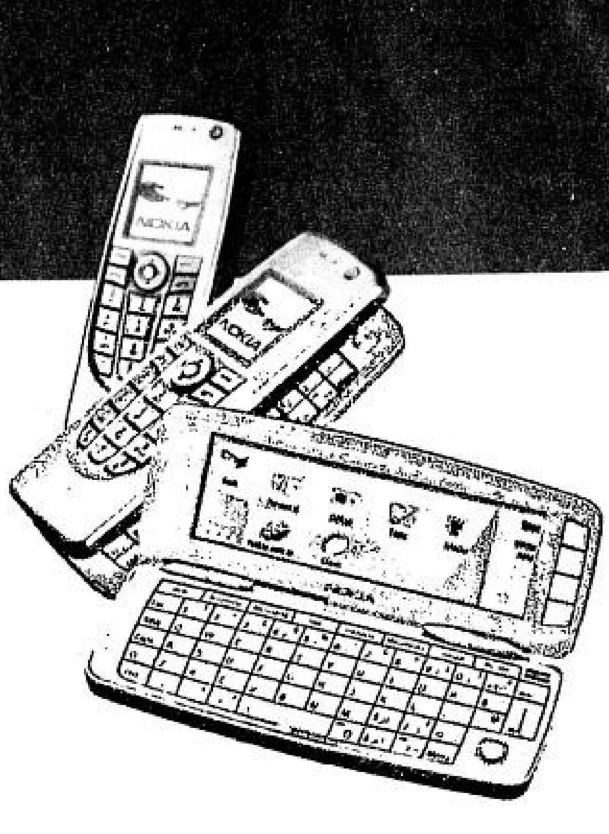

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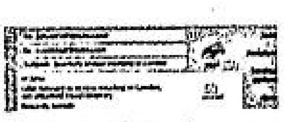
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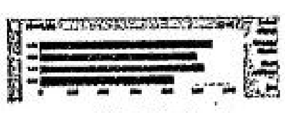
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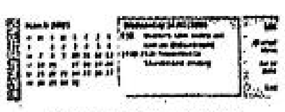
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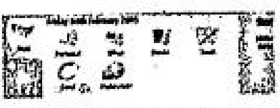
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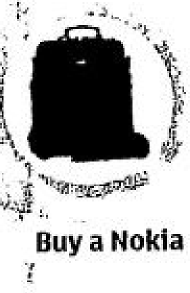

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
B2-1
E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph
BUSINESS Friday
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

"Satisfy the customer first, last and always"
Philip Crosby's "Reflections on Quality"
Maybank

Be a successful 'challenger brand'

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

NEW products and brands that enter the marketplace each year exceed the natural demand of consumers.

The big players are always trying attacking another category.

The brand leaders do not just enjoy proportional benefit, they enjoy exponential advantage the larger they get.

It is okay not to be number one for as long as your business is healthy.

Consumers only remember five to seven brands.

These were some of the insights shared by marketing guru Hermawan Kartajaya during a talk last Tuesday on "Challenging the big brands." A United Kingdom list of 50 gurus "who shape the future of marketing" lists only two Asians—Kartajaya and Kenichi Ohmae, a Japanese.

Kartajaya portrays the reality of non-market leaders as tough-grim. He points out for example that "while a second-rank brand makes a fifth as much profit as a third-rank brand, a brand leader that dominates the category makes twice as much profit as either of them."

But being number two or number three means you are the challenger, says Kartajaya. Which means you can work and become the leader.

William Hung of the "American Idol" fame may have been booted out but has a following and even cut a record.

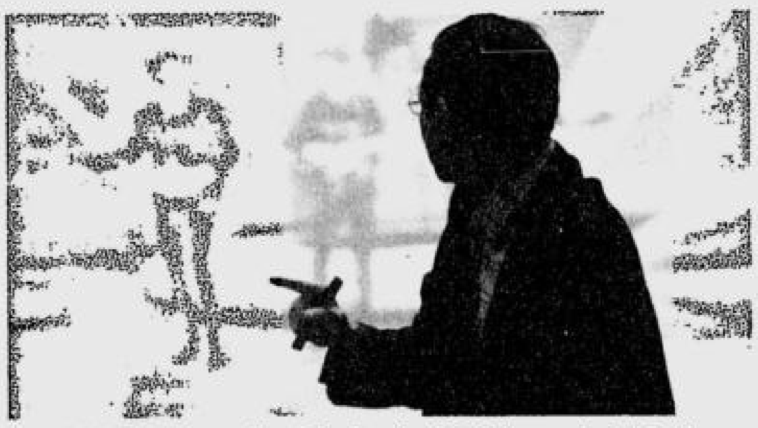
"A challenger brand is a number-two or number three brand who is up against a much bigger and more muscular brand—The Establishment Brand," he defines.

Not number one

"Challengers are by definition not the number one brands nor are they niche. Challenger brands have a mind-set that encompasses two key differentiators: ambitions that exceed their conventional marketing resources and a preparedness to accept the marketing implications of the gap between their ambition and their marketing resource.

The final criteria for a challenger has to be success. There is no point in imitating an aggressive brand that has failed—this is not challenge, merely arrogance or misguided ambition."

MARKETING guru Hermawan Kartajaya says it's not always bad to be the number two brand for as long as the business is healthy. But staying number one means thinking like a number two. PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN



KARTAJAYA shows a clip of the Beatles US debut at the Ed Sullivan show calling them then a challenger.

Eight credos

Kartajaya lists eight credos of challenger brands:

1. Break with your own immediate past.
2. Build up a lighthouse identity.
3. Assume thought leadership of the category.
4. Create symbols of reevaluation.
5. Sacrifice.
6. Overcommit.
7. Use advertising and publicity as a high leverage asset.
8. Become ideas-centered rather than consumer-centered.

"The eight credos suggest that successful challenger marketing is in fact made up of three critical areas: attitude, strategy and behavior," states Kartajaya.

Kartajaya points out in explaining the first credo that there is value in inexperience.

He points to some successful individuals who had no experience in the businesses they went into—Richard Branson of Virgin Atlantic, Michael Dell of Dell Computers, Anita Roddick of The Body Shop.

"Experience can sometimes become a trap. We are taught that category is valuable, perhaps essential. There is natural tendency in a company to think of its sphere of business or category as being special, with its own rules, intrinsically different from everyone else."

"Consumers don't think what they experience in one market has to be necessarily any different from what they like in another. In many ways they'd like the experience they get in some categories to be more like those they get in another."

Also, customers don't always know what they want. They cannot tell you what they want because the category has effectively defined it for them."

A very interesting point he raises is "we have become so sophisticated in our marketing and research that we filter and interpret too much; sometimes the most important attitudes to the category are ignored simply because they come out of the customer's mouth first."

Building a lighthouse brand means navigating the customer. "Being different is not enough. You have to clearly explain who you are and what you stand for."

Kartajaya points out there are "two kinds of brand leader—the market leader, the biggest player and the brand everybody lives with and the thought leader, the brand that everybody talks about."

Examples of these are Wonderbra, Harley Davidson, Absolute Vodka. These brands are not the leaders but are very popular.

"To succeed, the communication between company and consumer had to be more than simply an innovation or the launch of a new product. What made them a symbol of reevaluation was the wrapping, the context, rather than the novelty in itself," explains the guru on the fourth credo.

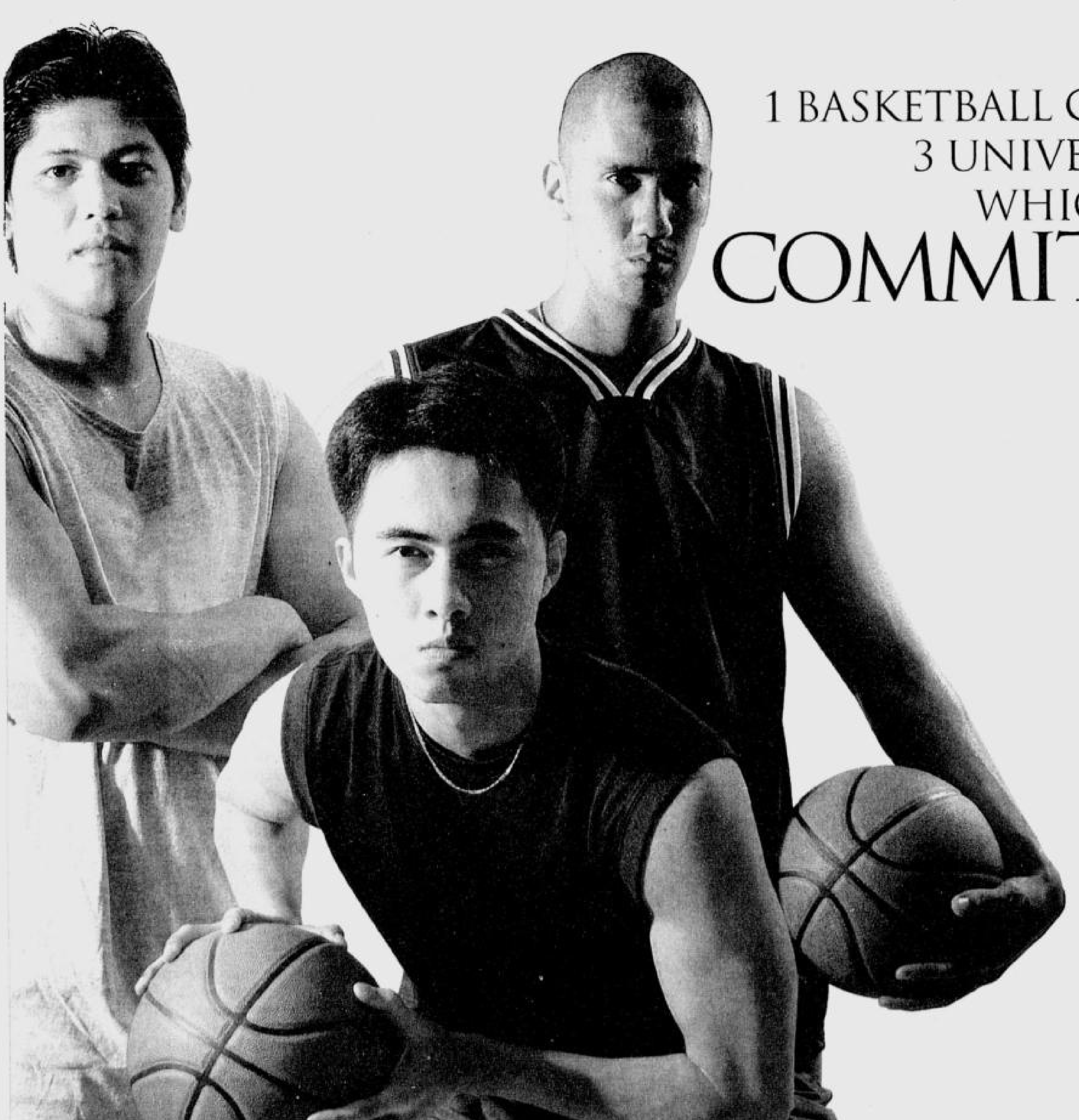
On the credo of sacrifice, Kartajaya talks of creating a brand mystery "of creating curiosity with a small budget."

Overcommitment, says the guru, is a must. "The first task of overcommitment is to identify the decisive points on which the challenger must succeed."

In using advertising as a high-leverage asset, Kartajaya says to use ideas that seize the audience's imagination and that strategy is only as good as the quality of ideas it produces.

Lastly, Kartajaya emphasizes the importance of generating ideas "because ideas are the fuel for a challenger's growth."

"The reason most challengers lose momentum is they fail to realize they have to change in order to remain the same."



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Going up? The CTA elevated

TAX-FILES

By Wilfredo U. Villanueva
and Magnolia Mabel P. Movido
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OUT of the passage of Republic Act No. 9282 (RA No. 9282) emerged a brand new Court of Tax Appeals (CTA).

Substantial changes were introduced that relate to the composition and the jurisdiction of the CTA. Taxpayers need to know the significance of these changes because the CTA offers a very important forum to litigate contentious issues between taxpayers and government's major tax collecting agencies.

Under the Tax Code and its implementing regulations, when the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) issues an assessment against a taxpayer, the latter can file a formal protest against the assessment. If the protest is denied, the taxpayer may appeal to the CTA within 30 days from receipt of the denial if it constitutes the BIR Commissioner's final decision on the matter. Prior to the passage of RA No. 9282, the decision of the CTA is appealable to the Court of Appeals (CA), and then finally to the Supreme Court (SC).

It is in this appeal process where the main change lies. It is now legislated that the CTA will be a co-equal body of the Court of Appeals, and a decision of the CTA en banc is now only reviewable by the SC. Thus, any party who is not satisfied with the CTA's decision may now directly appeal his case to the SC. This will not only hasten the disposition of tax cases, but it also significantly reduces the volume of cases that the CA will need to decide upon.

In this sense, the CTA has been "elevated" a notch higher, and justices now occupy its bench instead of judges. Moreover, six associate justices will now make up the CTA which used to be composed of only three judges. The CTA now sits in two Divisions of three justices each. It is anticipated that this new structure will result in faster and more efficient resolution of tax cases.

The decisions of each Division are reviewable by the Court sitting as a whole or en banc. This gives either party to the case (the taxpayer or the government) the opportunity to have its case reviewed under the collective wisdom of the Court sitting as one whole body. As pronounced by the SC in several cases, the CTA "by the nature of its functions is dedicated exclusively to the study and consideration of tax problems and has necessarily developed an expertise," and therefore, will most likely make sound resolutions of tax cases.

Appeals from disputed BIR assessments

In connection with the review by the CTA of tax assessments issued by the BIR, the pronouncements by the CTA in the case of Lascona Land Co., Inc vs. Commissioner of Internal Revenue (CTA Case No. 5777 dated January 4, 2000; reiterated in Allied Banking Corp. vs. Guillermo Parayno, CTA Case No. 6565 dated November 3, 2004) is noteworthy. This case involved, among others, the interpretation of Section 228 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 ("NIRC"), which reads:

"SEC. 228. Protesting of Assessment. – xxx xxx xxx Such assessment may be protested administratively by filing a request for reconsideration or reinvestigation within thirty (30) days from receipt of the assessment in such form and manner as may be prescribed by implementing rules and regulations. Within 60 days from filing of the protest, all relevant supporting documents shall have been submitted; otherwise, the assessment will become final.

If the protest is denied in whole or in part, or is not acted upon within 180 days from submission of documents, the taxpayer adversely affected by the decision or inaction may appeal to the Court of Tax Appeals within 30 days from receipt of the said decision, or from the lapse of the one hundred eighty (180)-day period; otherwise, the decision shall become final, executory and demandable."

The provision has been widely debated since its introduction in 1998, and it depends on which side of the fence you are. In Lascona, the BIR took the position that after the lapse of the 180-day period without the Commissioner of Internal Revenue (CIR) acting on the protest, the taxpayer should, within 30 days after the lapse of the said 180-day period, already elevate his protest to the CTA on appeal. Otherwise, the assessment will become final and executory.

However, the CTA pronounced that under Section 228 of the NIRC, it is not the assessment that will become final and executory, but the decision not appealed by the taxpayer within 30 days from receipt of the CIR's final decision on his protest. This means that the taxpayer may opt to wait until the CIR finally makes a final decision on his protest, and need not lodge an appeal to the CTA after the lapse of the 180-day period provided under Section 228. On the other hand, if the taxpayer would want to, then he can already elevate his case to the CTA after the lapse of the 180-day period.

It is hoped that this particular issue will be finally clarified in the Rules and Regulations implementing RA No. 9282, which is now pending with the SC.

Expanded Jurisdiction

As provided in the laws existing prior to RA No. 9282, the CTA retains exclusive appellate jurisdiction over the following:

(1) appeals by taxpayers from decisions or inaction by the CIR in cases involving disputed assessments, and refunds of taxes;

(2) appeals by taxpayers/importers from decisions of the Commissioner of Customs in assessment and forfeiture cases; and

(3) appeals by taxpayers/importers from decisions of the Secretary of Finance on customs cases elevated to him for automatic review from decisions of the Commissioner of Customs, which are originally rendered adverse to the Government.

Under the new law, however, the CTA's appellate jurisdiction was expanded to include the following: (1) decisions of the Regional Trial Courts (RTC) in local tax cases; (2) decisions of the Central Board of Assessment Appeals (CBAA) in cases involving the assessment and taxation of real property; and (3) decisions of the Secretary of Trade and Industry and the Secretary of Agriculture in the case of non-agricultural and agricultural products, respectively.

Taxpayers adversely affected by a decision, inaction, or ruling of the CIR, COC, Secretary of Finance, Secretary of Trade and Industry, CBAA, or RTC may file an appeal under Rule 42 of the Rules of Court with the CTA within thirty (30) days after such inaction or receipt of such decision or ruling. With respect to decisions or rulings of the CBAA and RTC in the exercise of their appellate jurisdiction, appeal shall be made by filing a petition for review under Rule 43 of the Rules of Court with the CTA en banc.

Another power granted by the new law to the CTA is the power to resolve criminal cases involving violations of the internal revenue laws. The regular trial courts, which used to be vested with this power, will have jurisdiction only over criminal cases involving unspecified amounts or amounts less than one million pesos, but these decisions will still be reviewed by the CTA.

The CTA did not have these powers under the law (RA No. 1125) that first created it. Again, this is beneficial to taxpayers and the government alike since all tax-related cases will now be resolved by the body most accustomed to them.

The CTA is also exclusively responsible for the resolution of tax collection cases involving amounts in excess of one million pesos. The power to resolve cases that involve less than this amount is granted to the Municipal and Metropolitan Trial Courts. These are resolved on appeal to the Regional Trial Courts and are reviewable by the CTA en banc via Rule 43 of the Rules of Court.

The new law provides that the civil cases for the recovery of taxes, penalties, and fees related to the criminal case filed will be resolved in one proceeding. This eliminates the expense of having to try another case for recovery of what has been determined to be due in a separate case. Trying two separate cases is not only costly, but also time-consuming.

The decisions made by the CTA in accordance with its new powers may be contested by the party adversely affected through a motion for new trial or reconsideration to be filed with the same division of the CTA that rendered the decision.

It is then appealable to the CTA en banc and then to the Supreme Court, if necessary. The general rules on matters of prosecution, appeal, and periods for rendering a decision by the regular courts shall now be applicable to the CTA.

The enactment of RA No. 9282 has provided an entirely new perspective to the disposition of all cases involving taxes, including those that are criminal in nature. At the end of the day, when the taxpayer and the taxing authority are unable to resolve disputed issues administratively, the court will have to assume jurisdiction. It is expected that the CTA will most efficiently dispose of these issues given its expanded powers and its well-recognized expertise in the interpretation of tax law.

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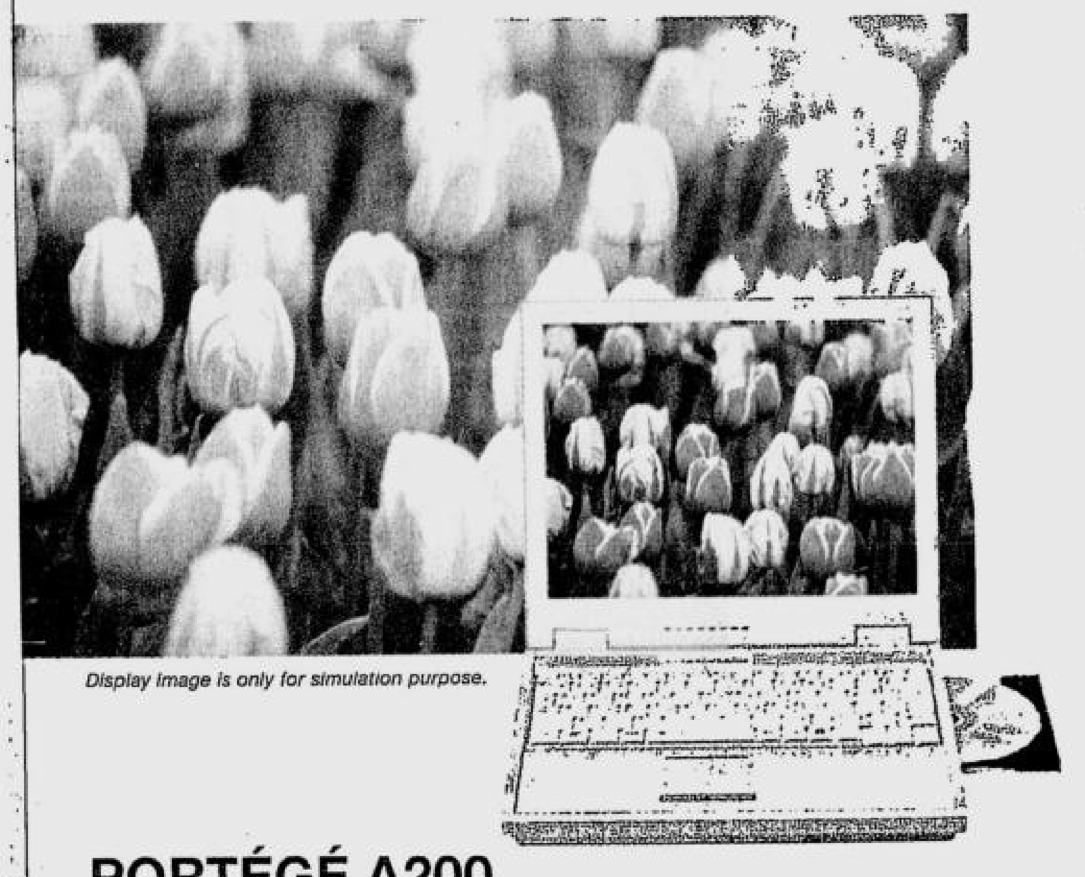

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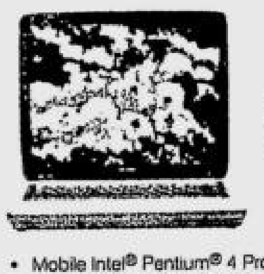

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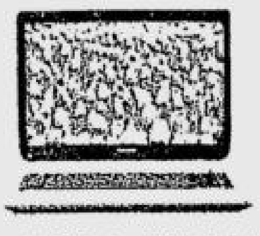

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Directory advertising helps firms reach more clients

BAUTISTA

WHEN business is bad, many companies reduce costs by cutting down on advertising. Some however choose to take a different route. Instead of slashing their budget, these companies increase their advertising spending or use different media to boost sales.

But more to the point, they pick the advertising medium that is guaranteed to put them in direct touch with the buyers of their goods or services—those who are ready, willing, and able.

Concepcion Tolentino, operations manager of Solex Express Phils. Inc., says the company received 50 percent more business inquiries the first year its ad appeared in the DPC Yellow Pages last year.

"We're in the international freight forwarding business and we got a lot of calls asking about rates going to different countries. The inquiries in turn led to about 20 percent increase in new business. Because of the positive result of our directory placement, we decided to continue our partnership with DPC Yellow Pages," Tolentino says.

"The advantage of directory advertising is that customers are ready to buy. When they use the Yellow Pages, they already have a specific product or service they need. It is only a matter of choosing from which company to get these products or services and that is where the Yellow Pages helps them," explains Ricardo D. Bautista, president of Directories Philippines Corp. (DPC), the official publisher of 35 telephone directories nationwide, including PLDT, Globe, Bayantel, Piltel and PT&T.

"At DPC Yellow Pages, we deliver value-for-money advertising," Bautista declares.

"About 10 percent of our new clients could be attributed to our ads in the Yellow Pages. It's really very helpful because many of our clients, like embassies or executives, ask their assistants to check the Yellow Pages if they need certain services," says Josephine Nunez, administrative officer of Intercare Healthcare Systems, a provider of alternative healthcare services.

Teody Maliberan, president and general manager of Thermo Pack Cooling System Inc., said his company's partnership with DPC enabled them to meet their business targets.

"We hope to further increase our revenue for the coming years," he says.

DPC Yellow Pages has over 2,400 categories of products and services.

The listing is also available through the Internet (www.e-yellowpages.ph) and mobile phone (text "EYP" to 288 for Smart subscribers and 2333 for Globe users).

The text service is also available to Sun subscribers through "The Mall."

No longer just about products

By Marlet D. Salazar

IT is no longer just about the product or how you sell it. Bringing in the numbers now also mean having an effective sales organization, the one that is focused, completely understands the consumers, and helps nurture relationships between the company and customers.

It is also very important to note that the sales force is one of the most important implementing components of marketing, this according to Eligio Ma. Santos, Ph.D., faculty at the Washington SyCip Graduate School of Business of the Asian Institute of Management.

Santos will give a talk on "X-Factor in Sales Force Effectiveness" in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Feb. 16. The paper discusses the elements that guide the sales force in facing the challenges in sales and achieving success in the process using the technologies of organizational development.

One of the issues which confront any consumer-centered industry or company, is truly getting to know who the customers are. Otherwise, the firm cannot serve them effectively. The issue is the ability of the sales force to consistently identify and implement the four "Rs" of sales force effectiveness: identifying the right customer, delivering the right message, providing right resources, and right call frequency.

"The sales force must be able to communicate the right message to its customers. With this, they have to get the support and the right resources so the product that they will introduce will have the chance to reach the consumer eventually," Santos says.

Right people

But how can you impart the right message if you don't have the right people?

"The challenge now is hiring the right people, who will implement consistently and successfully the agreed marketing program and strategies," says Santos who has three decades of experience in consumer, pharmaceutical and health care sales, marketing and distribution in the Southeast Asian region.

But with all the distractions, a wide array of product options, and challenges, which include a very discriminating customer, how can you be assured of successful breakthroughs?

Santos came up with a hypothesis that one can create a separate culture within a large organization—from an autocratic, highly directive culture to a participative delegating culture. Here will come in the nurturing of the relationship between the company their sales personnel and consumers.

Implementing all the strategies wouldn't be possible if the leader is not effective enough to execute these things.

"Leadership is not a matter of genetics," Santos says. "But more essential is competence, credibility, passion, commitment, courage and character to manage change and lead an organization transformation."

Santos made an actual case study of three large pharmaceutical/consumer products distribution companies in the 1980's to the year 2000. He helped transform these companies to become the leading distributors in the Philippines.

Building stages

"To be able to come up with desired results there are what you call building stages that will lead to organization transformation," Based on the study, there are five buildings stages that will lead to organization transformation—sales information building, rationalization building stage, recognition, consolidation and stabilization building stages.

SANTOS

There is also a need to identify key variables in an effective sales organization such as its structure, reward system, training and development, etc., which has to be looked into in relation to its building stage.

There has to be a sufficient database system to rationalize the organization. For example there has to be adequate sales data first in order to establish benchmark data as a basis for change and future decisions. Once there is sufficient information, then there is basis for rationalization .of incentive programs for example and a proper reward system would be in place.

In implementing the building stages one doesn't have to be in a higher position in a company to achieve business results, according to Santos. The customers' expectations at the sales person's level are regular coverage, clear messages about the products they carry and the right promotional support whenever needed. "The big difference is to integrate all these in a viable sales system. Going to the next building stage of rationalization will require consistent performance of the sales person and reinforcement from their immediate supervisor's field training visits.

Once the rationalization of systems are in place, then it is time to work on the recognition and consolidation building stages where esteem building based on task accomplishment is a key driver for success. In order to sustain the positive gains, Santos created new positions within the sales organization to stabilize the change process.

Managing change

Ultimately, the head of the sales organization must have a paradigm of managing change and must have a good way of using behavioral tools apart from the functional tools in sales and marketing management.

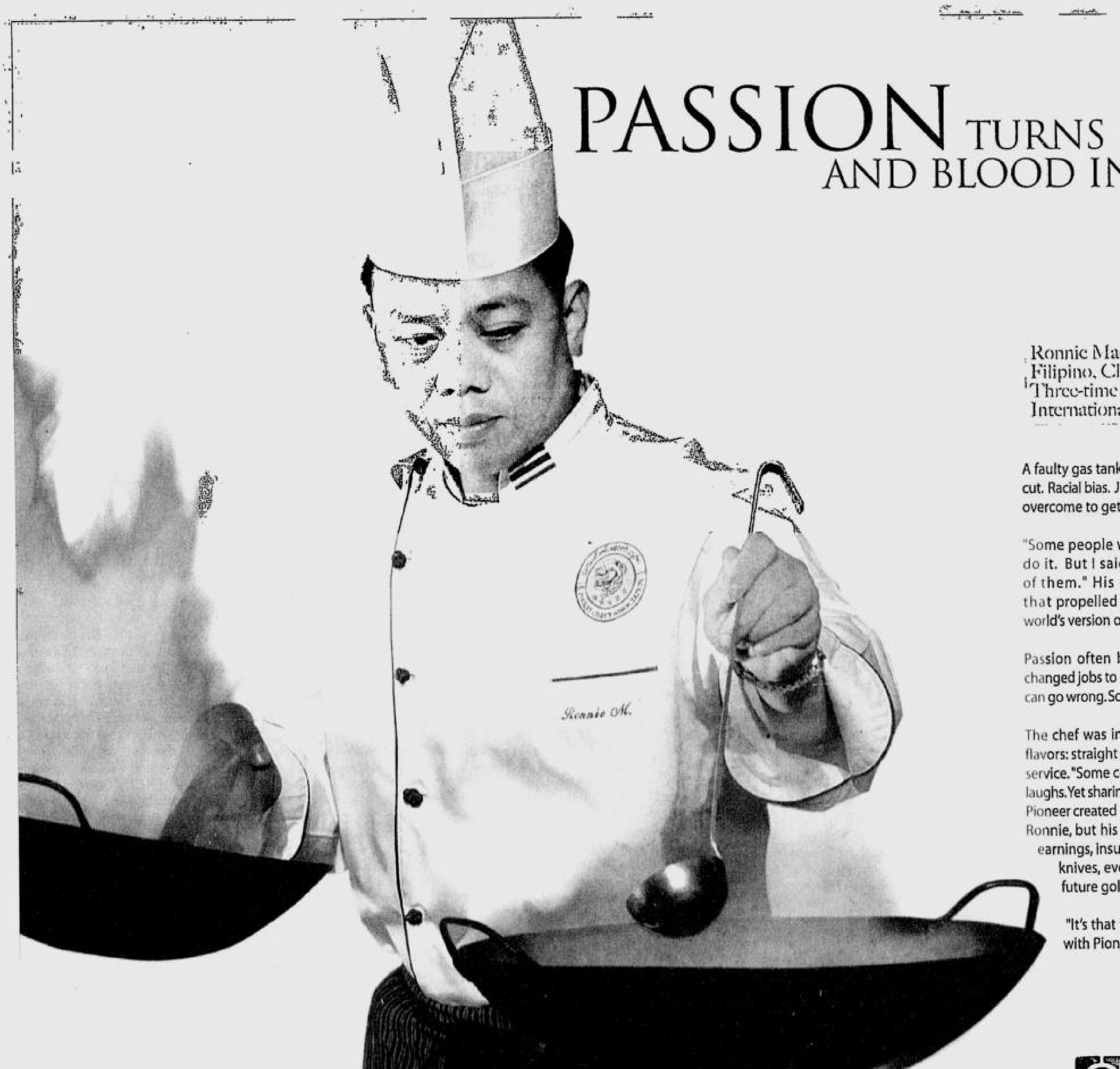
Santos utilizes a business excellence model drawn from quality management. The model focuses on the achievement of business results, which are sales, markets/share and profits.

"The objectives of any sales marketing organization will only result if you have installed relevant business processes which will impact on customer delight, people delight and impact on society," Santos says. "But this process has to be driven by a leader who is able to articulate a clear strategy and policy approach of managing people, leading and motivating and also the proper use of resources."

Now, what really is the X-Factor in sales force effectiveness?

The leaders must understand the linkage between the success of operations and the ability to be congruent with the desired business results.

The organization must have clarity of goals, supported with strong advocate within top management. A leader looks at and drives change in the total system.



PASSION TURNS FIRE, STEEL AND BLOOD INTO GOLD.

Ronnie Macuja
Filipino, Chef
Three-time gold medalist.
International Salon Culinaire, Thailand

A faulty gas tank. A finger bleeding from a deep knife cut. Racial bias. Just three of the things Ronnie Macuja's overcome to get to where he is today.

"Some people will look at you and think you can't do it. But I said to myself: One day I will be one of them." His casual manner masks the drive that propelled him to executive chef – the culinary world's version of a CEO – before he even turned 40.

Passion often brings risk. "I've moved countries, changed jobs to meet my goals. In the kitchen, anything can go wrong. So in other aspects, I keep things simple."

The chef was impressed by Pioneer's own blend of flavors: straight talk, warmed with truly personalized service. "Some companies won't even insure chefs," he laughs. Yet sharing his passion for overcoming obstacles, Pioneer created custom coverage to cover not just Chef Ronnie, but his career: a dollar product to shield his earnings, insurance for his precious personal set of knives, even an incentive that rewards him for future gold medals.

"It's that thorough, yet that simple. That's why with Pioneer, I get it," beams Chef Ronnie.

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Pearl Principle: Changing hopelessness into optimism

By Nelia Cruz Sarcol
Contributor

(Part 2: Essence of the Pearl Principle)

AN UNSUSPECTING oyster, peaceful and content with the way submarine life was taking its normal course, was suddenly invaded by hundreds of teredo micro-organisms from everywhere. A daring teredo swept its way straight into the inner chambers of the oyster's shell and lodged in its virgin flesh. The oyster tried to expel the invader but as it did, the irritation burnt the inflaming muscles more. The discomfort became unbearably painful. Rescue from the surrounding waters was nowhere in sight. The oyster could only think of an impending death.

But you see, the oyster refused to die. While its effort to expel the teredo became futile, the oyster instead thought of easing up on the deadly irritation wrought upon its aching flesh. It then assessed the resources available to it from within. The oyster discovered that it has a natural weapon to respond to this kind of threat: by secreting nacre.

With the resolve to stop the pain and discomfort, it coated the teredo with layers upon layers of this smooth and luminous nacre. Painstakingly, the oyster labored hard and a pearl was created.

Proudly, the Pearl Principle National Coalition, as convened by like minded Filipinos from the middle class, offers you the gift of the pearl, this miraculous living gift from the sea—the only gemstone produced by a living entity—the creation of beauty from adversity, of art from irritation.

The story of the pearl illustrates that even the worst and most painful experience can become something of a healing artistry. The creation of a pearl is a glowing example of a mortal threat transformed into magnificence.

The Pearl Principle is the advocacy of transforming a state of hopelessness into a state of optimism were opportunities are created as in the making of a pearl.

Our country today is literally and figuratively invaded by countless "deadly teredos" that are breaking apart our "envisioned strong Republic" and rendering our people hopeless. The irritation and the discomfort brought about by crisis after crisis, have reached unbearably high proportions.

The Pearl Principle reminds us that adversity is really part of ourselves. However, some of us respond to these pains and hardships by fixating on the pain, keeping it fresh in our minds for weeks, months and even years—some a lifetime. Others take small irritations and blow them out of proportion, making them larger irritations. Complaining and dwelling on the problem, on the pain or ordeals endured will only result in a life overshadowed by unending dissatisfaction and stagnation.

The Pearl Principle reminds us that we can convert any pain, misfortune, ordeal or failure to something of value. Our essence as a nation is formed out of obstacles that we confront as a people and as a country. Our experiences, painful and hard surround the core of our being. Each of these challenges is our nucleus for creation, each victory over the hardships we endure is another pearl in our path.

Transformation occurs again and again in our growing process. Every incident, every emotion, every success, every sorrow, becomes another layer of our national development ... exactly like the many layers of nacre that coats the deadly teredo microorganism—creating a beautiful pearl.

Our pain, which can be unspeakably intense and sometimes debilitating, brings the lessons we never forget. They are imprinted deeply in our core—we should use these experiences to better weather future struggles. Our core must be solid and hard, the layering actually helps us mature ... and shall help us see beyond what others do not see. Experience is the best teacher, if we choose to make it so.

How many of us can take a challenge, as oysters do, find the gift within ourselves and actually turn it into something positive? This is what the Pearl Principle teaches us—to find and honor our strength and flexibility, our inner power to create and succeed rather than break apart.

We offer the Pearl Principle as a potent tool and strategy to help us recover from this debilitating state of hopelessness. We present the analogy of the oyster, we call the Pearl Principle—as the most viable way to effect positive change: the change from within and within one's sphere.

Together, we shall become the catalysts for change to make our country a better nation ... we shall endeavor to become the oysters that would create the true Pearl of the Orient.

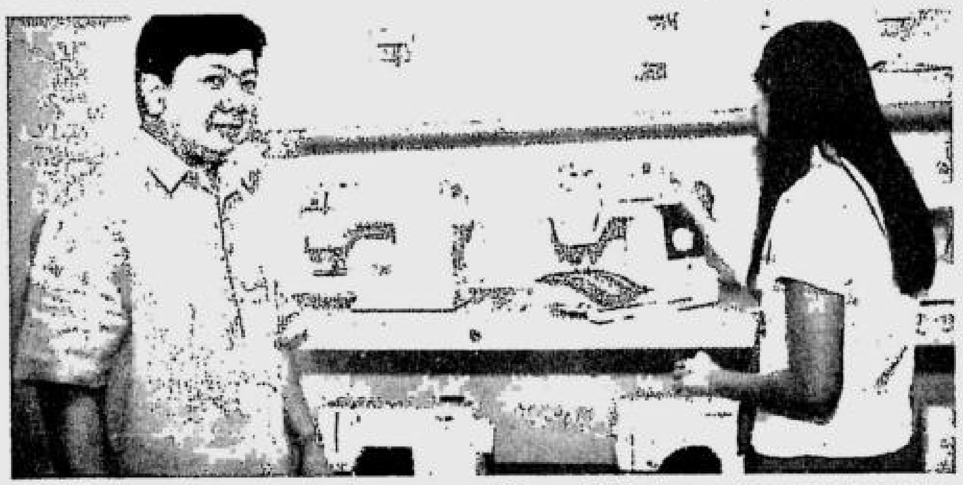
Our vision is to create a S.T.R.I.N.G. of P.E.A.R.L.S.

This means a Strong and Tenacious Republic Instituted by Nation-loving Generations of Passionate, Ethical, Action-driven and Results-focused Leaders of Society.

This vision was crafted by a group of over 500 Filipinos from all walks of life—who found themselves huddled last Sept. 28 and 29, 2004 at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati City—in search of a new meaning and of a new resolve to better themselves—ourselves—for the country. There is a need to inspire and henceforth, engage every Filipino to roll up their sleeves and buckle down to work to awaken our strong sense of nationhood.

The group leaders selected by the participants themselves have met twice since then. The group flew to Cebu City in November 2004 and met again in Makati City last Jan. 10, 2005. There is another meeting on Febr. 12, 2005, Saturday. Those who attended Pearl Principle Conference last September 2004 and anyone else interested to join the core group, please don't hesitate to email joseph.titar@cie.edu for details. The group is now called the Pearl Principle National Coalition.

Note: Part 3 will be about the Pearl Principle Mission and Strategies which include advocacy in Generative Management and Leadership; Linking Entrepreneurship and Tourism; the Gear Theory of Development


RAMIR Libre, sales and marketing manager of Singer Philippines, at the new showroom

Firm which taught world to sew bares plans

SINGER, the name synonymous to sewing machine, is keen on "reviving" interest throughout the country as it embarks on a more aggressive marketing for its existing and new product lines this year.

According to Ramir Libre, sales and marketing manager, one of the company's goals is to re-educate its market on the many uses of a sewing machine. "Let it be said that Singer taught the world to sew. That is our competitive advantage but still, we want to be more dynamic in terms of marketing our products."

With eight area sales offices and more than 180 dealers nationwide, Singer is aiming for higher numbers via exclusive distributors and franchise dealers. "We want to take on new opportunities to expand our business and such ventures proved a great takeoff point for us," says Libre.

Targeting a 30-percent sales increase by the first quarter, Singer is not only assessing the expected results of its promising undertakings but remains concerned over the affordability. Says Libre: "We offer competitive prices and affordable payment schemes for our valued customers. In fact, we were the first to offer this easy payment plan not only here in the Philippines but worldwide."

Singer is also looking at tapping major appliance stores to carry its products such as gas ranges, room air-conditioners along with other small appliance including the recently acquired Manttra pressure cooker. Libre added this could be a big boost to Singer's range of products, "This should help us meet our sales targets for 2005."

Despite its focus on various areas of business, Singer remains committed to better appreciation of sewing.

Libre says that "part of the plan is to set up schools for sewing in selected Singer satellite offices. We will also continue conducting workshops and other sewing-related activities for the benefit of its loyal and even, prospective patrons."

A glimpse of Singer's complete line of sewing machines and appliance are available for viewing at the newly renovated showroom located in its main office at 373 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila. For more info, call 527-9958.

Honoring trade partners

ROBINSONS Supermarket and Big R Supercenter recently feted their suppliers with a Trade Partners Night, an annual affair that gathers the supermarket and the supercenter's suppliers, distributors and concessionaires.

This year's event was held at the Robinsons Galleria trade hall and was attended by key personalities in the manufacturing and distribution business.

The Trade Partners Night caps off a year of fruitful partnerships and marks a new phase of more productive ventures.

The outstanding trade partners for 2004 were: Nestle Phils. Inc. (platinum awardee); Unilever Phils. Inc., Procter & Gamble Phils. and San Miguel Corp. (gold awardees); and United Laboratories, McKenzie Distribution Co. Inc., and Foodsphere Inc. (silver awardees).

The Apple awardees, representing the best concessionaire/supplier in the fresh department were Global Fresh Products Inc. and San Miguel Foods Inc. for Manila/Luzon and Susie Chan for Visayas/Mindanao.

The best general merchandise/apparel concessionaire award, given for the first time this year, went to Ong Lian Kiao.

Meanwhile, the awardees for the Robinsons choice for best key account management specialist were: For GMA /Luzon area, Alfie Rivera—Nestle Phils. Inc. ice cream division (fresh category); Alain Atanacio—Monde Nissin Corp. (food category), and Sophie Mendoza—Procter & Gamble Phils. (non-food category).

For Visayas/Mindanao: Edson Yu—Monterey Farms (fresh category); Douglas Porter—Purefoods Hormel Corp. (food category), and Ryan Villaflores—Unilever Phils. Inc. (non-food category).

The annual Trade Partners Night has always been a very important occasion for Robinsons Supermarket and Supercenter because the event is a venue to recognize the efforts of their business partners. The awards also motivate the trade partners to become more efficient, translating to better products and services for consumers.

JOHNIP Cua of P&G, Lance Gokongwei of JG Summit, Howard Belton of Unilever

These abilities of special folks

By Emmaruth Gabriel
Contributor

MARIO Tolentino's dreams were shattered when a flying piece of metal from an exploding pumping facility hit him in the legs.

"They had to cut them off," states Tolentino.

Immediately after the accident, Tolentino sunk into a deep depression. "My wife left me and I had to stop working as a government employee," he says in Pilipino.

A high fever permanently put Lito Madrona's world in darkness. "I lost my sight after getting sick. The barrio doctor said I had a congenital eye disease and I will no longer be able to see again," recalls Madrona.

Madrona had to stop working the farm he and his family depended on for survival.

For a while, both Tolentino and Madrona felt the challenges and bitter realities of being physically challenged. They tried everything from selling cigarettes to making slippers to survive.

As luck would have it, both Tolentino and Madrona chanced upon the National Federation of Cooperatives with Disability (NFCPWD). Nine years later, both physically challenged individuals have been transformed into productive workers.

NFCPWD is the biggest umbrella organization of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs). At present, the federation has about 450 PWD members belonging to 11 cooperatives in at least 10 regions in the country. Its main line of business is the production of quality school chairs and tables. Registered in July of 1988 with the Cooperative Development Authority, it is the first of its kind in the country.

In order to enable the PWDs to work, machines and the plant layout were designed to meet the physical challenges of members. NFCPWD uses a line production system. Twenty workers can easily produce between 500 to 700 chairs a month.

Madrona's blindness is no hindrance to his metal cutting skills. He has patterned grooves to follow and cuts metal as fast as any normal person can. Blind workers use their sense of touch, put the pattern on the pipes and cut with hacksaws to spec. Deaf-mutes do the painting. Tolentino can weld and build at least P1,000 worth of chair skeletons a day.

Member workers with disability are treated as any normal worker in the sense that they get paid depending on their output. Presently, Tolentino and Madrona are being paid on a piece rate basis. There are at least 20 production steps that can better boost their income.

During the interview, Tolentino and Madrona were busy fashioning metal into public school chairs to be delivered to the Department of Education.

NFCPWD general manager Johnny Lantion explains that all their members, including Tolentino and Madrona, are in a manufacturing frenzy to complete the P48 million contract of school chairs to be delivered in 150 days to the DepEd.

The total financing required to complete the project is P34 million. This amount covers all production and delivery expenses. NFCPWD intends to borrow the amount. The NFCPWD projects it will spend over P1 million in interest expenses but they still expect to make a healthy profit.

The NFCPWD borrowed P2 million from the NATCCO Central Loan Fund, which was used as deposit for the surety bond submitted to DepEd-PS. The loan carries an interest of 17 percent a year, inclusive of the 2 percent guarantee fee of the Philippine Equity Foundation. Upon approval of any loan from other financing institutions, the NFCPWD intends to pay off this loan from NATCCO Central Loan Fund to lessen interest expenses.

The Christian Blind Mission (CBM) has given the NFCPWD a P1.4 million grant to be used for the purchase of additional machinery.

From his Countryside Development Fund, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. gave the NFCPWD a P1 million interest-free loan which will be managed by the Landbank of the Philippines. One member cooperative of the NFCPWD, Atlas Mining Community Handicapped Association Multi-Purpose Cooperative, secured a P3 million credit line from LBP Cebu. This loan will be used by the cooperative for the production of their share in the contract.

The NFCPWD is requesting the Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF), the NATCCO Central Loan Fund and the Foundation for Sustainable Society Inc. (FSSI) to jointly and equally grant a P15-million credit line for 10 months to partially finance the project. This will be the initial funding required so that NFCPWD can purchase the raw materials required for the project, to avoid price increases, especially on the steel items.

Funding agencies are more selective, according to National Anti-Poverty Commission Vice Chair Oscar Francisco. "They prefer NGOs with impact on the ground level," adds Francisco in a telephone interview.

"PEF is very low key. The communities find about us through NGOs and the CODE-NGO network. We are not just a funding agency but a funding mechanism that wants to build up local capacities. We want to be a leading organization in this respect," answers PEF director Veronica Villavicencio when asked why they respond to groups like NFCPWD.

"We approached PEF because they are easier to deal with than banks. The processing is fast," according to Lantion. With the money that they now are using, members of the cooperative are expected to earn P3,000 to P5,000 per month for the duration of the project. Each member cooperative is expected to have profits of P350,000 to P400,000. People's organizations will benefit from the wood they will supply for the project.

Tolentino brings home at least P1,000 a day to his family. "That helps us a lot," he beams. Madrona is also too happy to hand over the P300 daily to his relatives. "If I were not here, I think I would be found in the streets, begging or doing other things than working," he says.

More importantly, rather than hide in the shadow of shame and self-pity, Tolentino and Madrona hold their heads high in breaking a sweat, feeding their spirits and self-esteem to better heights.

SPECIALLY abled workers are used to make school chairs.

DESPITE their condition, they are able to support their families.

MARIO Tolentino

Going into business can smell this good

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CATBALOGAN, Samar—Fresh flower decorations are almost unheard of in the three Samar provinces.

During All Soul's Day, for instance, most residents here usually content themselves with colored crepe paper artfully folded into flower shapes, which are then tied together and stuck on stiff colored paper to make a corona or flower arrangement.

Residents who do want some nice fresh flowers to honor their dead, have to travel all the way to Ormoc in Southern Leyte, or get a shipment from Cebu or Manila, before they can get their hands on their favorite flowers.

It is not that Samareños do not want to stop and smell the roses, so to speak. It is just that practically no one grows ornamental plants and flowers here on a commercial scale.

The Samar Technology and Resource Center, however, is out to slowly change the landscape.

Through seminars and training sessions, the STRC is encouraging local farmers to make ornamental plants and flowers bloom, alongside the traditional coconut and vegetables, and earn themselves additional money.

STRC technical officer Rodolfo Macalalag tells Business Friday that growing plants and flowers has good earnings potential.

These grow easily, planting does not require extensive technical background, and a market is just waiting to buy. All it takes to make a success out of the venture is dedication and a good-sized plot of land.

According to Macalalag, farmers can start their ornamental plants business by planting dendrobiums, a type of orchid that can be harvested in just eight months to one year.

It can grow in readily available plant media, such as charcoal and coconut fiber, but needs to be protected from the sun. Used fishnets can be used to shade the orchids.

Macalalag says dendrobiums are becoming increasingly popular, because they are not only nice to look at, but can last for as long as two weeks in a vase, as long as water is kept clean. The orchids are also hardy enough to stand the travel from the farm to the marketplace.

The STRC has planting material for dendrobiums available to the interested farmers. After a year, the orchids can be sold for at least P150 a stem or stalk.

Another plant with good potential is the anthurium, but these take at least three years to grow from sucker to flowering plant.

Macalalag, however, says that the entrepreneur interested in anthuriums only needs to invest at the start of the project, for the anthuriums flower year after year and these produce the suckers, which can be transplanted to grow more anthuriums.

Anthuriums are bought for their nice shape and their long vase life of more than two weeks. These are displayed either as cut flowers or as potted plants.

Like the dendrobiums, the anthuriums can grow in media that can hold a lot of water, such as coconut husks. But these need more shade, equivalent to about five layers of used fish nets placed roughly 10 feet from the ground.

Anthurium mother plants produce about six flowers a year, and are sold for about P250 each.

Macalalag says Samar is ideal for growing these plants because of the weather and the fertile soil, and the STRC has a demonstration farm here to show the doubting farmers that it can be done.

The STRC was set up by the Philippine Business for Social Progress to test and disseminate small farming systems and technologies to respond to the needs of small farmers and fisherfolk.

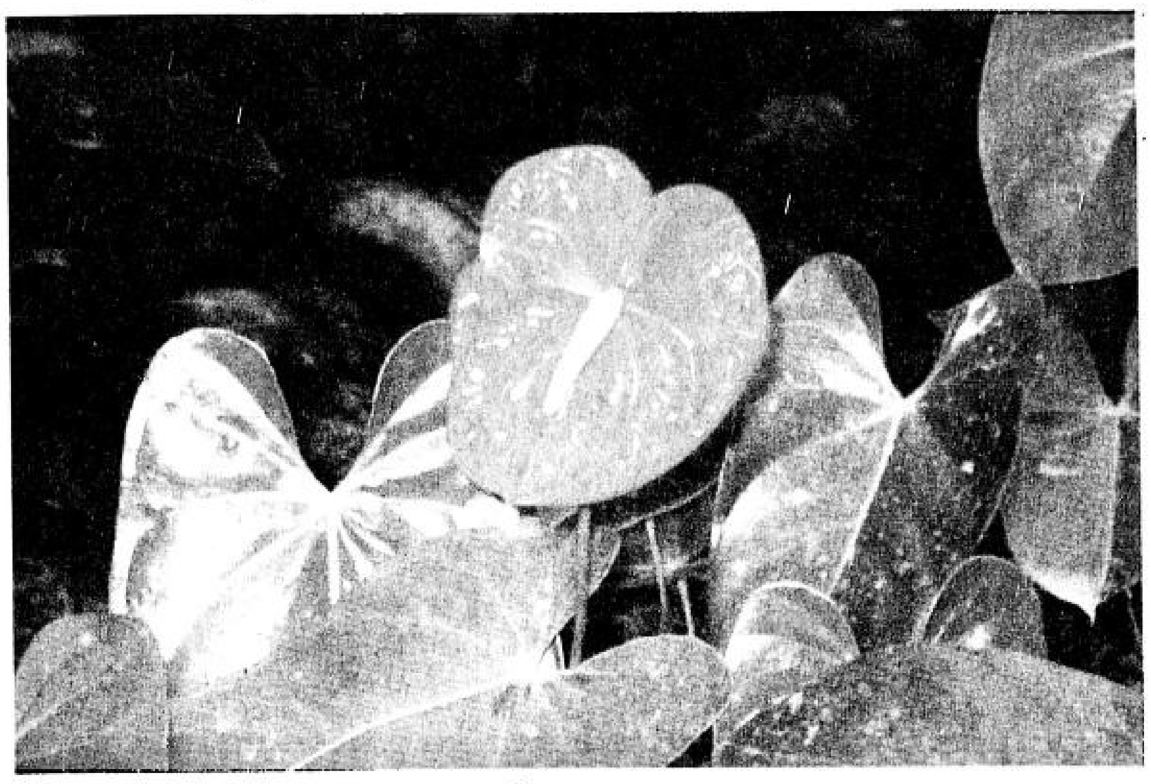
He says interested farmers can start with just a small piece of land, even just 400 square meters, to try out and master their skills, before they go for mass production.

Aside from anthuriums and dendrobiums, Macalalag says there is also good demand for haleconias, commonly known as birds of paradise, which are sold for P5 a flower.

There are also wildflowers such as deep red torch flowers that sell for P25 each, and ginger plants that also go for P5 each, as well as different kinds of bromeliads that sell for P150 a pot.

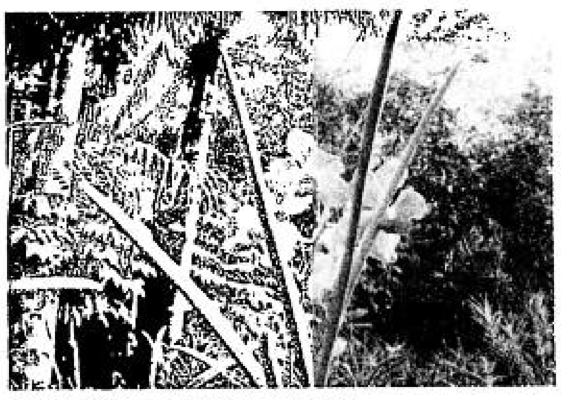
Macalalag says more farmers are getting interested in trying out the prospects of growing ornamental plants and flowers, and the STRC is there to provide them with the technical expertise.

If they do get into the business, then more Samarenos will be enticed to leave those artificial flowers behind.


ANTHURIUMS sell well due to their long vase life

DENDROBIUMS mature in about a year

TORCH flowers are ideal for arrangements


ORCHIDS are always easy to sell

THEIR DISCIPLINE
IS THE SILENT NOTE IN EVERY SONG.

Loboc Children's Choir
Filipinos, Schoolchildren
Gold medalist, International Folksong
Choir Festival 2003, Barcelona

In September 2003, 30 children from a tiny school in Bohol stunned themselves and the world by earning near-perfect marks in an elite choir competition. Voices pure, angelic and pitch-perfect, they beat 12 adult choirs to become the judges' unanimous choice.

So how does a choir become the best in the world? "Discipline and interest," according to Alma Fernando-Taldo, conductor and musical director. Rigorous practice 5 days a week. No sweets, no soda, no grade below 70. Period. "Even the small things matter," says Ma'am Alma, daughter and granddaughter of respected Loboc musicians.

No surprise then, that for their travels, to guard against costs incurred from missed performances and to reward future triumphs, the children of Loboc are entrusted to Pioneer: a company that shares their discipline to get even the smallest details right.

When you're thoroughly prepared, hitting the right note is simple. Ask the Loboc children – they get it.

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People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

RP furniture to have edge in North American market

PHILIPPINE furniture products will have an edge in the North American market this year.

This projection came from the Foreign Buyers Association of the Philippines (Fobap), citing market trends favoring the country's furniture designs.

"Furniture designs incorporating indigenous Philippine materials will have an edge," said Fobap president Eliseo C. Miranda, referring to the US market. "Outdoor furniture is expected to generate significant demands, not just for summer in particular but year round."

Miranda also cited other market factors that could favor the country's wide variety of furniture products.

"Minimalist is the byword for some of our clients this year-less complicated designs and focused more on functionality. Yet, others say from classics to contemporary to an array of new designs are in the pipeline," Miranda said.

Worldwide, however, Miranda projected exports to grow to a less significant level.

"Best estimate will be in the range of 5-10 percent. This is particularly in the furniture, table tops, decorative and home accessories categories," Miranda said.

The foreign markets being supplied by the country's furniture industry include Italy, Spain, The Netherlands, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, France, Australia, United Kingdom, Japan, Thailand, and the United States, among others.

The products come from some 2,500 exporting establishments out of some 15,000 furniture manufacturers generating a total of 481,500 regular jobs and 300,000 subcontractors.

The best of their furniture products will go on exhibit at the Philippine International Furniture Show (PIFS), which will be staged at the World Trade Center Metro Manila and the Philippine Trade Training Center from Feb. 28 to March 3.

PIFS 2005 is expected to be swamped by foreign and local buyers as a result of the extensive promotional campaign being undertaken by the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP), the organizer of this prestigious annual international event.

CFIP's promo campaign includes foreign and local ad placements, trade missions, and massive e-mail and postcard distribution covering the vast markets of the Middle East, Spain and Spanish-speaking Europe, Germany, Western and Eastern Europe, Canada, and the Americas.

Assisting the CFIP on market information and other related matters is Fobap, which provides feedback from foreign buyers on demand trends, pricing, competition, and other inputs, whenever requested.

Incorporated in 1997 to protect foreign buyers' interests and promote Philippine exports, Fobap serves as a key organization in establishing linkages between the local enterprises and the major market players worldwide.

DIGITAL PLEASURES OPENS AT THE GATEWAY MALL

Jorge Araneta (5th from left, chair and CEO of the Araneta Group of Companies and Samie Lim (right), president of Automatic Centre, led the guests at the opening of Digital Pleasures expo at the Activity Area of the newly opened Gateway Mall in Araneta Center. The two-week-long exhibit showcases the latest and the newest in digital video and imaging technologies such as flat panel TVs, high definition projection TVs, and DVD players from the country's leading brands. Offering zero percent interest on products, the expo will run up to Jan 31. Other guests of honor include (from left) Tom Tseng, president, Kolin Philippines; Karen Agustin, Bb Pilipinas World 2002; Hideyuki Takato, incoming president, JVC Philippines; Margaret Ann Bayot, Bb Pilipinas International 2004; Maricar Balagtas, Bb Pilipinas Universe 2004; Koji Uehigashi, director for sales and marketing, Panasonic Philippines; Jhezanie Javier, Bb Pilipinas International 2003; Sang Il Nam, LG VP-marketing; and Stella Marquez Araneta, chair, Bb Pilipinas Charities Foundation.

More PEP on B2-7

TeamAsia seminar on presentation skills

STRATEGIC marketing and communications firm TeamAsia will conduct a seminar on delivering presentations that produce results Feb. 16 at ExportBank Plaza, Makati City. "Effective Presentations for Decision Makers" emphasizes the difference between merely presenting one's ideas as against actually getting one's point-of-view across to an intended audience. Speaker and TeamAsia president Monette Iturralde-Hamlin said, "With the advent of new technology, prevailing harsh business conditions and intense competition, the challenge of communicating the superiority of your products and services compared to the competition's is critical. Companies are beginning to realize that all presentations to customers, clients, and stakeholders must not merely present information but must be powerfully persuasive to be effective." Hamlin is president and founder of TeamAsia. Under her leadership, TeamAsia has presented many of the world's top management and motivational speakers in the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia.

Better dandruff treatment with Stieprox

DID YOU know that the cold weather does not only bring coughs and colds but may also cause dandruff?

Dandruff, the chronic itchy condition of the scalp, is believed to be most common during the cold, dry season and most rare during the summer months. Dermatologists say that flaking tends to be more noticeable during cold weather because our skin is drier overall during that time.

Although dandruff is believed to be associated with an overgrowth of a fungus commonly found on the skin and scalp called Pityrosporum ovale, common factors like climate along with excessively oily skin, hormone production, dietary influences, and stress are all acknowledged to contribute significantly to this chronic scalp condition.

For most people, dandruff is a lifetime condition that one has to deal with. Preventing dandruff completely would be difficult, but the good news is that the fungus that causes it can be controlled.

Many anti-dandruff products that claim to be effective abound in the market, but only a few actually treat the fungal cause of the problem.

One recently introduced product in the market, which effectively treats dandruff, is Stieprox shampoo. Stieprox contains ciclopirox olamine, an antifungal agent that has previously been shown to be effective in treating different dermatological problems like jock itch, athlete's foot, and ringworm.

A study conducted at Seoul National University in South Korea showed that dandruff shampoo containing 1.5 percent ciclopirox olamine is effective in treating mild to moderate dandruff.

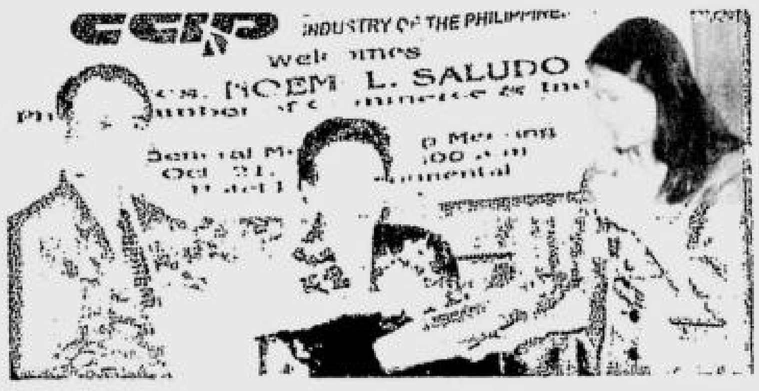
The study compared the effect of ciclopirox olamine to that of ketoconazole among 64 Koreans experiencing mild to moderate dandruff. Results showed that both compounds caused a progressive and rapid decline in dandruff severity. Both compounds were also observed to prevent the recurrence of dandruff during the post treatment period.

One difference, though that was observed in the study was that ciclopirox olamine shampoo has a higher cosmetic acceptability compared to its competitor. Study participants reported that Stieprox did not cause hair dryness, unpleasant odor and discomfort, and that it does not alter treated (permed and dyed) hair, thus, providing the more trendy patients an improved option for dandruff treatment.

Ciclopirox olamine shampoo is manufactured by Stiefel Philippines Inc under the brand name Stieprox. It is available in Mercury Drugstore outlets nationwide.

BAKERY WORLD 2005 SPONSORS

Cook Magazine, the Culinary Lifestyle Magazine, and Practical Cook, aired every Sunday at 9 a.m. on ABC 5 with famous food stylist Nancy Reyes-Lumen as the magazine's editor-in-chief and TV program's host, has agreed to be the media co-presenter of Bakery World 2005 co-located Caterex 2005 and Sweets and Dairy Expo 2005, all being held from Jan. 26 to 29 at the World Trade Center. Various grand activities will be conducted during the 4-day show. For more information, call organizer Premier Events Plus Group Inc at 929-7993 or 63, 436-4209, 426-9603, 435-4790, or e-mail info@PEPGroup.com, or log on to www.bakeryworldexpo.com. Shown, from left, are Joel Pascual (president of Premier Events Plus Group Inc), Nancy Reyes and Randy Manaloto, VP-finance of PEPGroup, formalizing the MOA.



PCCI PRESIDENT GUEST AT CCIP QUARTERLY MEET

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) president Noemi L. Saludo was the guest speaker during the recent quarterly general membership meeting of the Chamber of Cosmetics Industry of the Philippines (CCIP) held at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila. Being the first female president of PCCI, Saludo lauded the cosmetics industry not only for its impact on the lifestyle and well-being of men and women, but also its role in the economy. Citing its potential for further growth, she said the cosmetics industry may yet be the vehicle for the Philippines to penetrate the global market. Saludo is shown receiving tokens of appreciation from CCIP president Jessica Plana (right) and director Alexander Guiao.

Dare to bare with Vaseline

START the new year right and witness great styles and moves as Vaseline Mark Minimizer Lotion makes its mall debut on Jan. 29, 10 a.m. at the North Wing of Power Plant Mall at Rockwell.

Highlighting the whole-day affair is a fashion and belly dancing presentation directed by Manila's top fashion director Jackie C. Aquino. Strutting their flawless figures are the country's most beautiful and active moms Ria Tanjuatco-Trillo, Claudine Trillo and Vaseline Mark Minimizer Lotion supermodel Rissa Mananquil-Samson.

Ladies who want to try the latest Get-In-Shape Dance Exercise, Belly Dancing Aerobics can join the fun as Lala Dinglasan's Baila dance group performs in the afternoon of fashion, healthy and beauty.

Vaseline Mark Minimizer Lotion is specially formulated to minimize and reduce the appearance of stretch marks. Unlike regular moisturizers, it contains the potent combination of triple lipid complex, alpha lipids, and lactic acid.

For more information, call 812-3542.

ProductFILES

St. Ives
Mountain Jasmine
Energizing Citrus
Whipped Silk
Swiss Vanilla
Cucumber Melon
Collagen Elastin
Cool Blue

Bath time pampering

ENJOY a lavish bath time experience with St. Ives Body Wash. All St. Ives Body Wash products contain vitamins and natural emollients to create a soft, light-textured cream. The luxurious lather gently cleanses and rinses off easily, with no residue to leave the skin soft and silky smooth to the touch. St. Ives Body Wash is infused with natural nourishing ingredients that provide intense moisture, and is whipped with Swiss glacial water and nourishing Swiss botanicals for softer, smoother skin. Aside from the refreshing fruity scents of the body wash line, pamper yourself with St. Ives botanical shampoos and conditioners, as well as with St. Ives hair treatment products, all enriched with 100-percent natural ingredients. St. Ives Body Wash and hair care products are available in supermarkets, drug stores and beauty bars nationwide.

Bits Clips

Rheumatology group meet

THE PHILIPPINE Rheumatology Association (PRA) will hold its 12th Annual Scientific Meeting on Jan. 28 and 29 at the Shangri-La Mactan Island Resort, Punta Engaño, Cebu. With its theme "The Power of Two": Generalist + Specialist (Basic Concepts…Present Challenges…Future Directions)," the convention will feature luncheon symposia on the management of postmenopausal osteoporosis and new approaches in the management of acute and chronic pain in arthritis and related condition, plenary lectures on steroids in rheumatic diseases, growing pains in children, novel therapies in RA, new concepts and future directions for OA, sex and arthritis and an interactive session on difficult lupus. Drs Daniel Thiebaud (Australia) and Surasak Nilganuwong (Thailand) present updates and new insight about estrogens, SERMs and bone and complementary medicine in rheumatic diseases. Interested parties can call the PRA secretariat care of Jo-Ann at 723-0101 local 5148 and 726-8875.

Picpa inducts 2005 officers

THE COUNTRY'S largest association of CPAs in the country, the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Picpa) will hold its 52nd Induction Ceremonies today, Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Intercontinental Manila. In 2005, Picpa has set the action theme for the year, "Get On…Move On!" that captures the thrust of the Institute's activities for the year, particularly as the Accredited Professional Organization (APO) for CPAs. Picpa was accorded the APO status on Oct. 2, 1975 by the Professional Regulation Commission and the Board of Accountancy. This year, Picpa is primarily focused on implementing the Philippine Accountancy Act of 2004 and its IRR as the Institute's guiding roadmap. For information, members are encouraged to call the national secretariat care of Beth Paguio at 723-5467 or 723-0691 to 93, or fax 723-6305 or e-mail picpa@qinet.net.

1st RP foodcart trade expo

THE FIRST Philippine Food Cart Trade Expo is all set from Jan. 28 to 30 at the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC). This 3-day business trade show of products and services in the growing food cart industry showcases an array of food cart products, ingredients, equipment and fixtures, as well as exhibitors comprising franchises, packaging, signages, internet services, graphic arts, cart designers and makers, food magazines, tracking systems and others. Highlighting Foodcart Business 2005, the Expo also offers a series of seminars on how to begin a profitable business with food carts, featuring resource speakers from the food cart industry. The trade expo is organized by JOSM Gospel Events Management Services. For more information, call 897-4635 or 789-8937 or e-mail instantnegosyoagad@yahoo.com.

Don Bosco Manda homecoming

DON BOSCO Technical College in Mandaluyong will be holding its Grand Alumni Homecoming on Jan. 29 at the school grounds. Dubbed "Bosconian, Uwi Ka Na," the homecoming will be hosted by this year's silver jubilarians, the Don Bosco High School Batch 1980. This year's theme was derived from the fondest wish of Fr. Miguel Solaroli of "bringing back home the Bosconians." Fr. Solaroli, fondly called Don Solaroli, was instrumental in organizing the DB Mandaluyong Alumni Association. The affair will commence with a Eucharistic Celebration to be officiated by Fr. Paul Bicomong, current administrator of DB Makati who completed his elementary education at DB Mandaluyong together with this year's silver jubilarians. Registration starts at 2 p.m. For more information, call DB Mandaluyong High School Batch '80 president Rei Oriola at 0918-9132515 or 744-2611, or call the DB Alumni Association at 531-6222/88 and look for Joey de Ocampo.

Children, friendship go together

AT MCDONALD'S reaching out to make friends with other children and enjoying them is made easier with a Happy Meal. This is the underlying message behind McDonald's new Happy Meal 45-second TV commercial, breaking onto TV screens this January. McDonald's wants to show kids that they joy of childhood lies in sharing. It may just be a delicious meal today, tomorrow it may be bigger stuff, like your life, that you will be called upon to share. Visit your nearest McDonald's store and collect all four McDonaldland Play-Doh items every time you treat yourself to a Happy Meal from Jan. 1 to 28.

Kung Hei Fat Choi at SM

CREATIF Foire Pro, a young, dynamic company known for its thematic and creatively designed exhibits, livens up your malling experience with a special exhibit dubbed "Kung Hei Fat Choi", a tribute to the legacy of the Chinese culture and tradition in our country. In a spectacle of sights and sounds at your favorite SM malls, Creatif pampers SM shoppers with colorful displays and exciting treats of Chinese food, lucky charm, Chinese folk dance, and lion dance numbers in time for the Chinese New Year celebration. Free psychic and feng shui consultations will also be made available to mall visitors on select dates and time. Visit the Creatif Foire Pro booths at SM City North Edsa from Jan. 27 to Feb. 16; SM Southmall from Feb. 2 to 15; SM City Fairview from Feb. 3 to 15; SM Megamall from Feb. 4 to 16; and SM Manila from Feb. 5 to 16.

PANA ELECTS NEW LEADERS

Prime ad body affirms mission to rise up to new challenges

STARTING what could be a landmark year for the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana), the advertising industry's premiere association, has elected a new set of officers and board of directors to lead its affairs for 2005. Former Pana auditor Ma. Belen M. Fernando succeeded Raul S. Alvarez as association president. Fernando is presently the VP for marketing of Alaska Milk Corp. Former PANA director Edgardo G. Sunico, country communication manager of Unilever Philippines Inc, was also elected as 2005 Pana vice-president.

The other officers include Procter & Gamble Philippines' senior legal counsel lawyer Gafar E. Lutian as secretary while association treasurer Roberto F. Banaag, VP for corporate communications of Planters Bank, was re-elected to his post. Former Pana director Francisco D. Cada, group product manager of Zest-O Corp is now auditor while Ma. Elena Mendoza-Dayrit of Gold's Gym was re-elected as PRO. This year's Pana directors are Cristina D. Esguerra of Ayala Land (re-elected), Sandra C. Puno of Nestle Philippines, Jesus G. Garcia of Philippine Airlines, Marie Angelyn V. Padilla of Sara Lee Philippines, 'and Benjamin M. Los Baños of STI. Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon remains as the Pana executive director.

For the past 47 years, Pana has achieved a noteworthy stature in Philippine society as the vanguard of "Truth in Advertising". It is a prime mover in enforcing the industry's ethical standards and a leader in empowering the denizens of the advertising and marketing industry. Incoming Pana president Blen Fernando attributes this success to the relentless dedication and passion of its members who over the years and in spite of the challenges and adversities remained steadfast to Pana's mission. "Since Pana's inception, its members have always worked as a single unit in order to stay true to its guiding principles and objectives. This is one of the main factors that has allowed the association to continue to make contributions to the advancement of advertising and marketing practices here in the Philippines", she said.

The evolving needs of the consumers, along with the shifting opportunities posed by new advances in media, has always inspired the association to work harder together. In 2004, relevant activities were done in order to further involve and build competencies among members and interested publics. Chief among these were the regular meetings done to re-introduce the association to its members and the very successful 2004 Pana Convention dubbed "View from the Top: Leaders Perspectives on Brand Building". This gathering helped members glean much-needed insights from the country's top marketing and brand leaders.

To continue this legacy and to help move the industry to even greater standards of excellence, president Fernando calls for a renewal of commitment and unity among the Pana members. "Pana is a mission-driven organization whose success is anchored on its team members working with a common source of motivation, passion for excellent results, and adherence to the mission-vision. This is something we have proven to have worked effectively and have benefited members and various sectors of the society. As such, we are once again affirming that we are remaining true to the ideal of unity and teamwork at Pana", she said.

BLEN Fernando, president

LAWYER Gafar Lutian, secretary

BOBBY Banaag, treasurer

TINA Esguerra, director

BENJIE Los Baños, director

ED SUNICO, vice president

DR. NONIE Azarcon
executive director

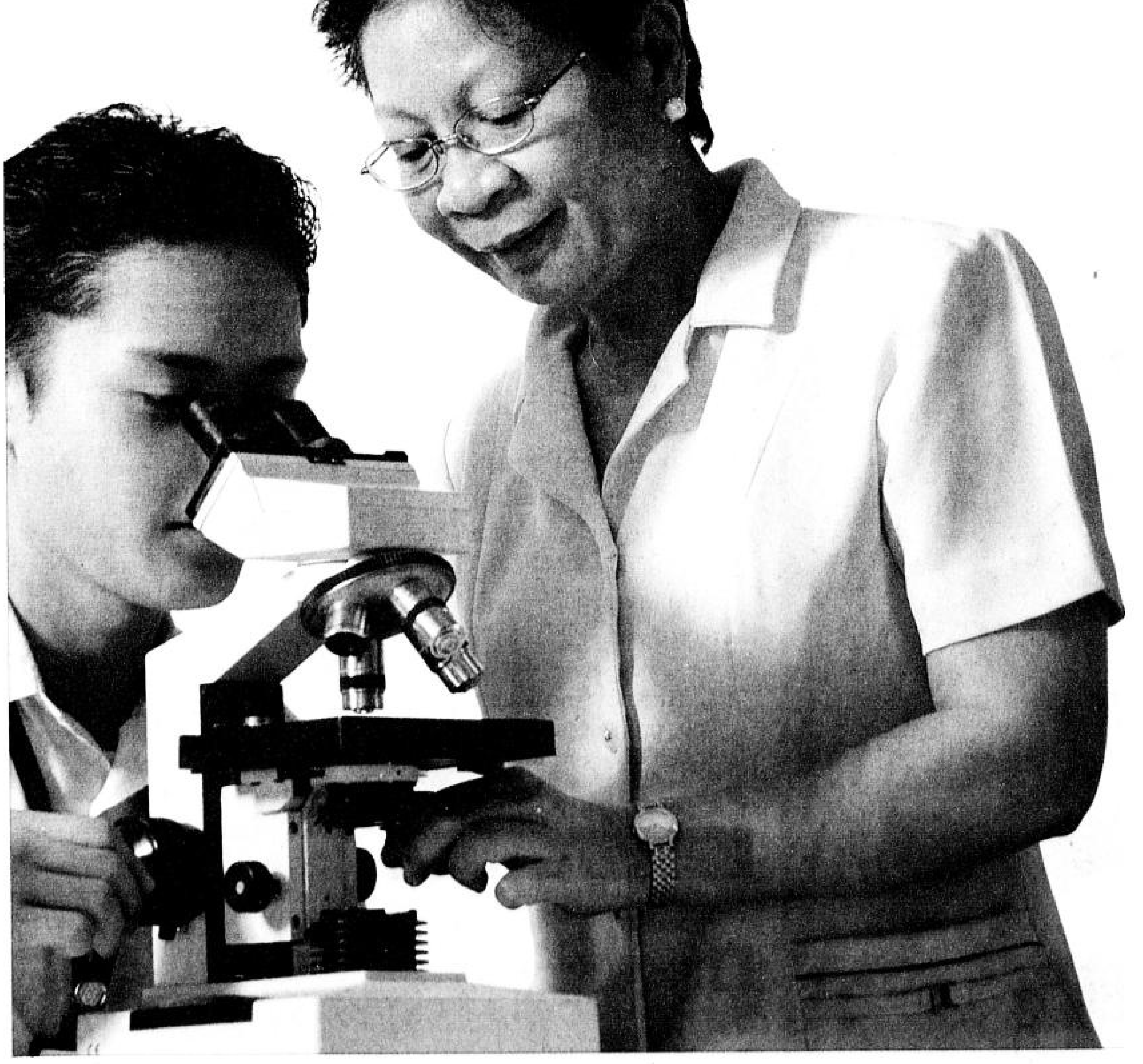
FRANCISCO Cada, auditor

MYLENE Dayrit, PRO

ANGELYN Padilla, director

JESUS Garcia, director

SANDRA Puno, director



A TEACHER WITH FOCUS MAY
NEVER HAVE A MANSION TO HER NAME.

BUT FOR NOW, A PLANET* WILL DO.

Dr. Josette Biyo
Filipino. Teacher
Worldwide winner, 2002 Intel
Excellence in Teaching Award, USA

In May 2002, Dr. Josette Talamera-Biyo bested 4,000 teachers from all over the world, to become the first Asian winner of the Intel award.

"I hoped to be a medical doctor," she recalls. "But for lack of finances, I took the first job available. The day I entered the classroom, I knew I wanted to be an excellent teacher." For 23 years now, she has made science come alive for her students. "I focus on what I can do – make the most complicated subject simple, without losing the essence."

No wonder then, whether it be her retirement, her children's future or her most precious tools – a laptop and projector – she prefers a company that shares her focus: keeping things simple yet thorough. No rocket science needed here. Dr. Biyo puts it simply– "With Pioneer, I get it."

*Planet Biyo, a minor planet in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. Identified by the Lincoln Laboratory, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and named after Dr. Josette Biyo in November 2002, as part of the Intel award.

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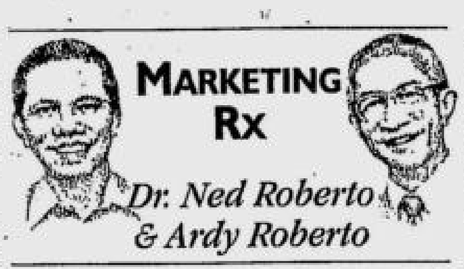
BUSINESS *Friday*

How do you market when you cannot advertise or solicit directly?



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Q: OUR COMPANY is an auditing firm, although we also have a significant tax practice, business outsourcing and corporate finance services. Ethical standards of the accounting profession restrict advertisements and direct solicitation, among others. How do you market when you cannot advertise or solicit directly.

A: In the industry, "practice personnel" are responsible for almost all phases of the business—we look for jobs/clients, we do the work required by clients, we trigger billings, we follow up collections.

On two occasions, the senior MRx-er was invited to address the same marketing problem/issue in a conference of architects and another one among medical doctors. Here's a summary of what he presented. These diagnoses and prescriptions should apply and benefit your own profession and practice.

First of all, we accept the wisdom (whatever that may be) of this restricting clause of your profession's code of ethics. You must respect and follow it.

Being a profession in its own right, marketing will not advice you to go against your profession's shared values. So let us explore alternatives.

One alternative is to use the underrated power of word-of-mouth (or "buzz") communication and media. So let's appreciate that power.

Use 'word-of-mouth' marketing

The author of 'Word-of-Mouth Marketing,' Jerry Wilson, after studying successful advertising campaigns that had, intentionally or unintentionally, married W-o-M (Word-of-Mouth) to their traditional mass media (mostly TV) advertising, concluded this: "The ad that manages 'buzz' via making its message have a high conversation value or using influential people to talk up the virtues of its advertised product will multiply its ad effectiveness."

The senior MRx-er is now researching W-o-M communication and replicating or validating Wilson's study in the local scene. One of the critical emerging insights states this:

"Most of the successful mass media communication campaigns owe their success to the triggered 'buzz' communication that followed the mass media launch."

The data shows that mass communication media is basically additive. On the other hand, W-o-M is multiplicative.

You may say that this still does not apply to you because it's about W-o-M (which we are assuming does not violate your code of ethics provision) but in combination with mass media (which your code of ethics prohibits). Here's the next insight that will qualify this immediate objection to our Marketing Rx.

Our study shows that for those mass media campaigns that actually engineered a W-o-M follow through, directly going for the W-o-M WITHOUT the mass media could have still made the campaign do its job. Why? Because a carefully and creatively crafted W-o-M communication whose communicator delivers its message and promise is multiplication.

So there's your Marketing Rx.

How do you actually apply and put into practice this Marketing Rx?

Please carefully note some "operative" words in our prescription and in Jerry Wilson's conclusion.

Wilson first talks about your message having "a high conversation value." That's actually the very essence of W-o-M communication. Its listeners will talk about it, and those who hear this, will talk to others about, and so into a multiplying cycle. Crafting a W-o-M campaign with a high conversation value is a skill. It's a special kind of skill. The people in the ad agencies called "creatives," "copywriters," "visualizers" are among those who have this skill. So if you have friends who are in this "profession," ask for their help. Of course, if you yourself have it, then you hit the jackpot.

Give your service for 'FREE'

Then Wilson also mentions "using influential people to talk up the virtues" of your service or practice. There's your other W-o-M strategy.

You could offer your services for FREE to an influential person or group of influential people. It's true that the rich get richer because they get a lot of freebies from companies who want their products or services to be used by the rich and famous. It's an expensive way to do "sampling" but once these influentials experience the joy or satisfaction of using your service, then chances are high that they will talk about this to their fellow influentials and now you've got word of mouth marketing in your favor. So why not offer for free your auditing services to the top five or 10 prospects on your wish list for about, say, three months? And once they accept your offer, make sure that you give top service as if they were paying clients.

> 'Make sure your promise in your word-of-mouth communication is fulfilled'

Let's now turn to the "operative" words of our Marketing Rx. We want to underscore these words: "whose communicator delivers its message and promise." Here is where the secret of any communication is to be found. You must make sure that your promise in your W-o-M communication is fulfilled. The clients persuaded by your W-o-M message must be satisfied with your service or practice. Under today's TQM (Total Quality Management) mantra, your clients must not only be satisfied, they must also be delighted. The ultimate is not only to delight clients but also to surprise them if you want them to keep on patronizing your practice.

Street smart ideas

As a bonus, here are some street-smart marketing ideas that may also help you:

- Sharpen your speaking skills and "offer" or make yourself available to give talks at your local Rotary Club or Chamber of Commerce's regular monthly meetings. Come up with interesting topics or titles like, "7 Stupid Million Peso Mistakes to Avoid When Filing and Paying Your Taxes." Invite a friend from the press to attend or offer them the rights to publish it for free.
- You can take the idea above and offer your clients a free two-hour seminar. Book it at a nice hotel function room and send extra "tickets" or invitations to your clients asking them to bring a friend along.
- Get into "Spiritual Marketing." Offer your services for free, not only to the rich, but also to fledgling start-ups with no strings attached—and with an attitude of not expecting anything in return from the entrepreneurs that you will help. Surely, the spiritual law of "sowing what you reap" will benefit everyone involved.

Hope these Marketing Rx's help you!

Feedback at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412.

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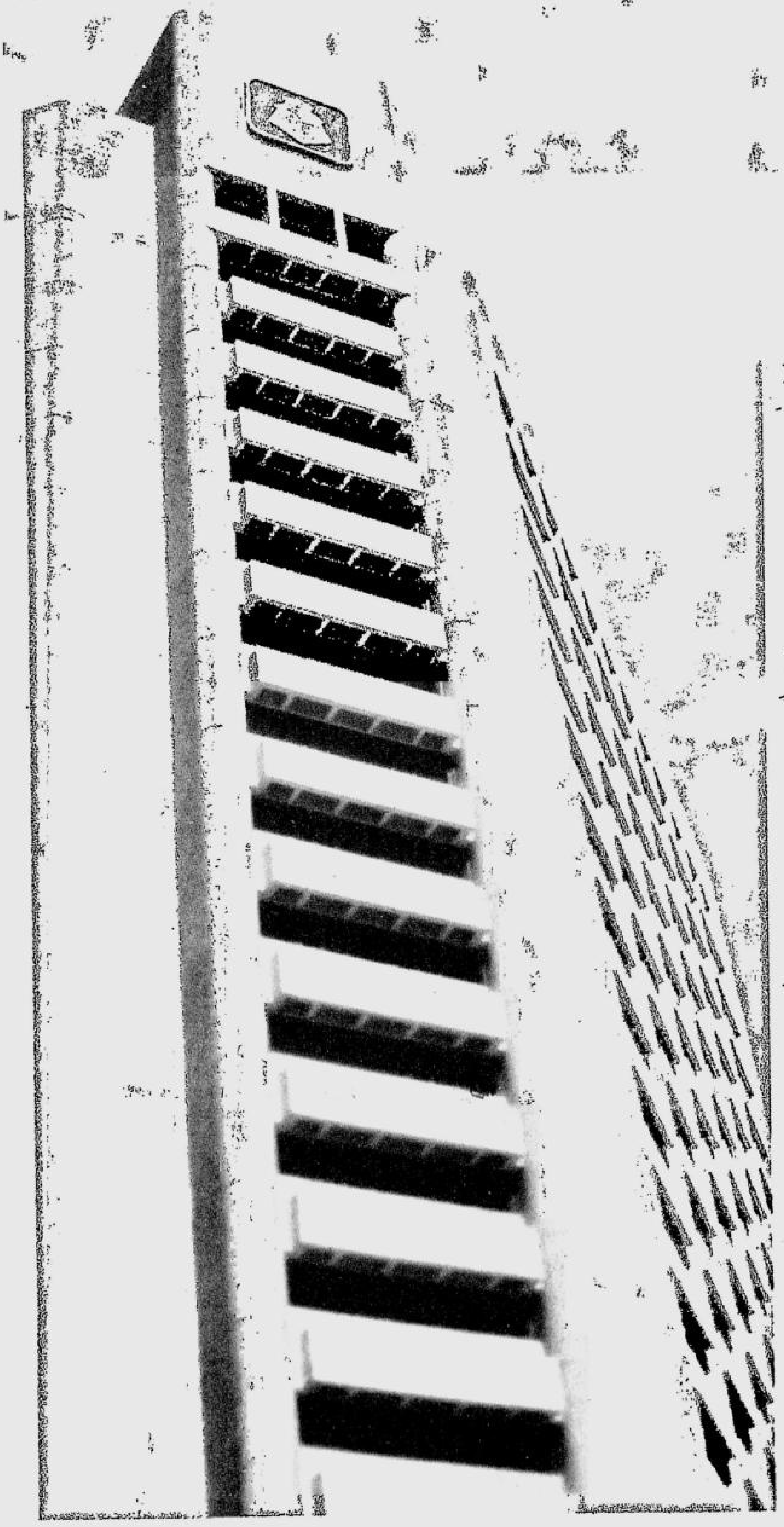
BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
A tradition of leadership

*based on December 31, 2004 market value of all assets managed



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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

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LAGERFELD
JACKY NAEGELEN

NEWS FROM PARIS

Ladylike fashion is back!

LACROIX
JEAN-PIERRE MULLER

PARIS—The message from Karl Lagerfeld at Chanel: Ladylike silhouettes are back.

There was something for everyone in the designer's haute couture collection Tuesday—black-and-white sparkling tweed suits dotted with clear sequins; an A-line dress in pale pink laundered faille with huge box pleats and three bows down the front; a pink tweed suit with a collarless coat slung over a curvy jacket and dress.

While still faithful to the signature "Chanel" boxy jacket, this season Lagerfeld cut it in beige or pastel tweeds and tossed it over dresses or jumpers with long waists and soft dirndl skirts.

His penchant for low-slung waists was surprising in a season where other designers attempted to move the eye away from the hips to just under the bust. Fashion logic dictates that once a look is pushed to an extreme, trends quickly shift in the opposite direction.

There was a strong breeze of romance and femininity blowing though nearly all of the spring 2005 collections shown Tuesday, with soft chiffons, satins, organza, lace and tulle covering bosoms and bottoms.

No exception

Christian Lacroix was no exception.

How fitting that he chose the Beaux Arts school to present his spring collection. Like a painter with brush in hand, Lacroix splashed the voluminous shapes he loves so much with fresh bright colors and abstract prints for a look that helps propel traditional couture into the 21st century.

Daywear featured lots of dress suits splashed with freestyle brush strokes. A white chiffon knee-length dress with masses of frothy white ruffles bubbled out from under a violet and fuchsia printed oversized trench coat in duchesse satin. The number set the tone for things to come.

An organza T-shirt with embroidered gold disks and white daisies was worn over a layered organza skirt with hand painted "impressionist" patterns. And just to throw in a little 3-D effect, part of the same print in a slouchy black and

LADYLIKE/ C4

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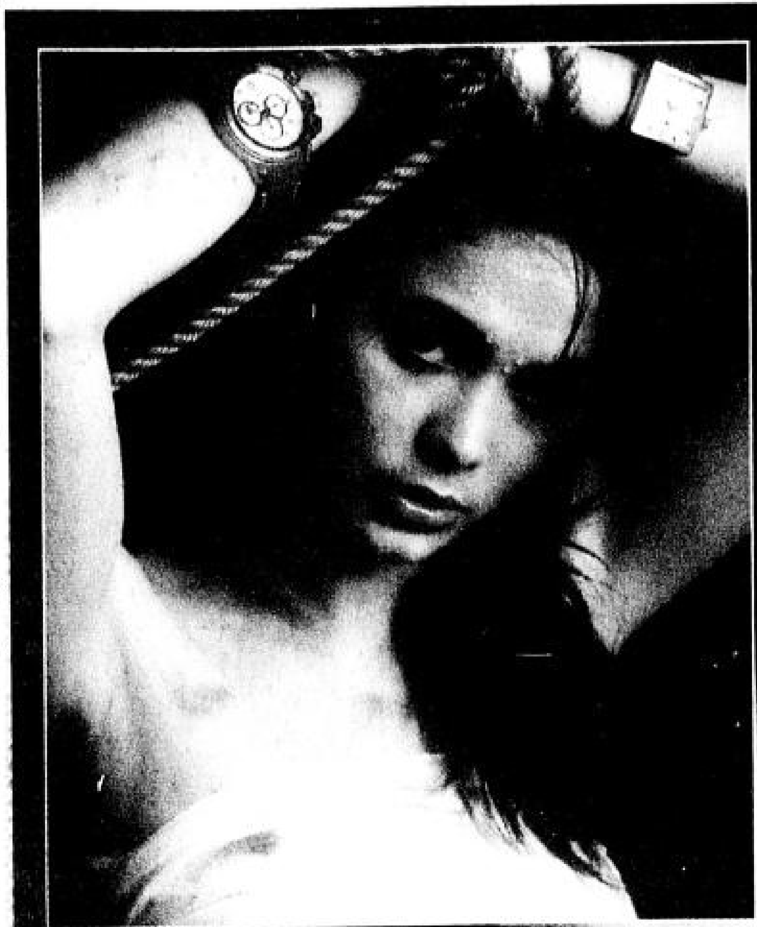
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3543 Series of 2004

Time forward



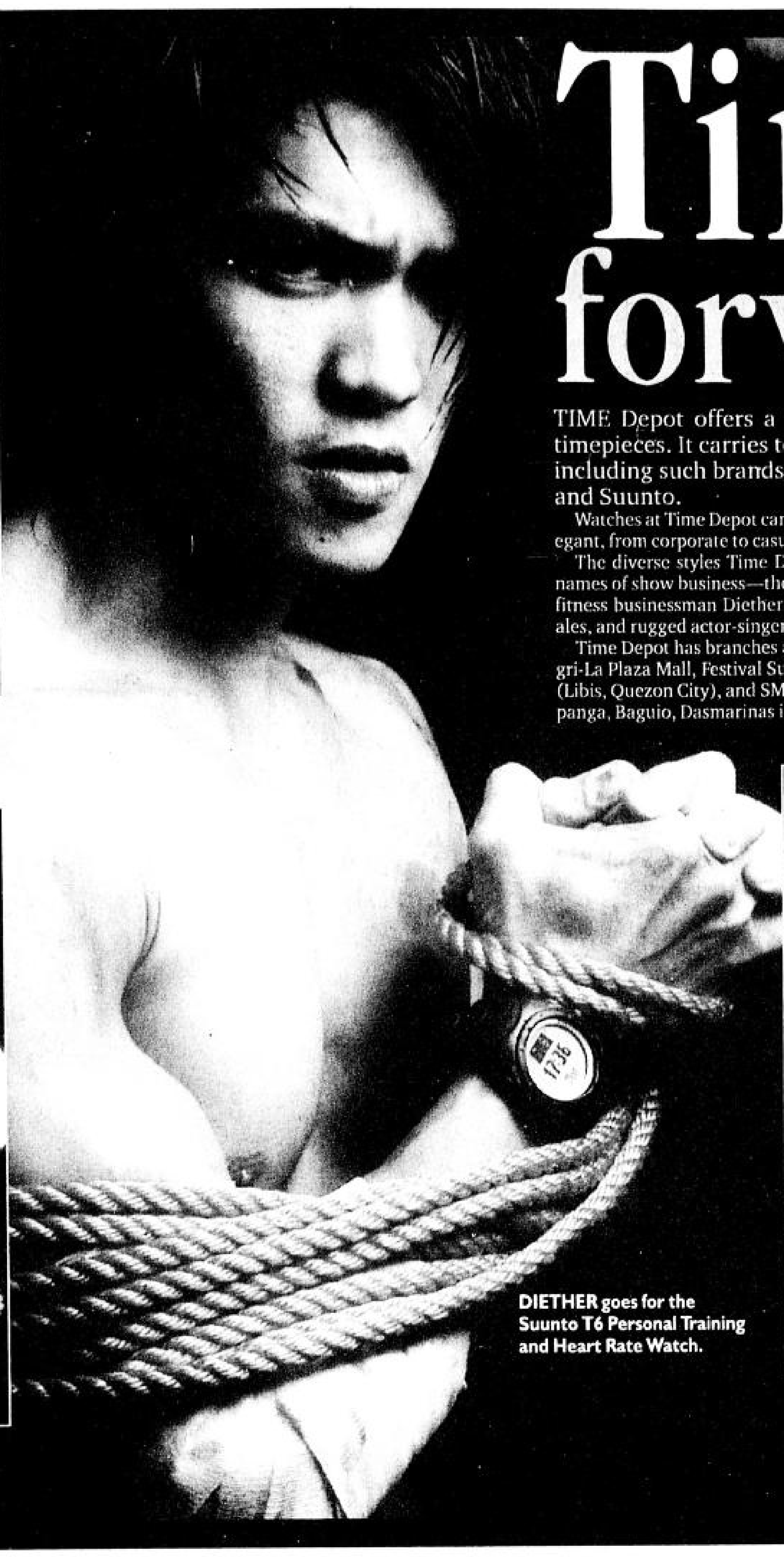
KRISTINE wears Nautica timepieces with large, bold contours, oversized crowns and streamlined faces.

TIME Depot offers a wide and colorful assortment of timepieces. It carries technologically advanced watches, including such brands as Casio, cK, Nautica, Marc Ecko, and Suunto.

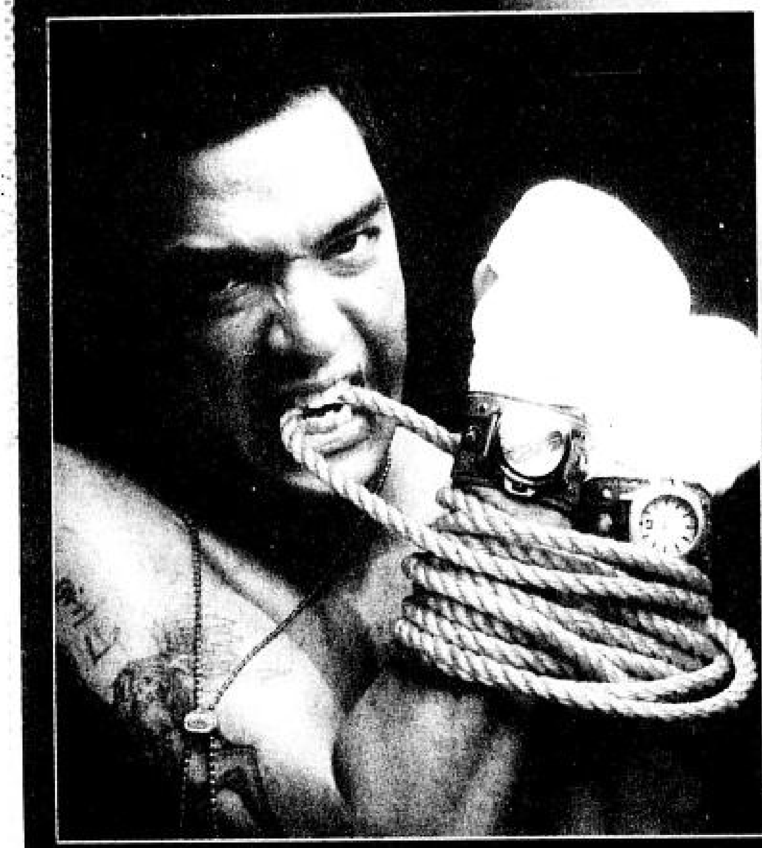
Watches at Time Depot carries a host of styles, from the sporty to the elegant, from corporate to casual, from hiphop to ultramodern.

The diverse styles Time Depot watches sport are reflected in the top names of show business—the beautiful Kristine Hermosa, sports buff and fitness businessman Diether Ocampo, actor and sports nut Jericho Rosales, and rugged actor-singer Bernard Palanca.

Time Depot has branches at Rockwell, Robinson's Place (Manila), Shagri-La Plaza Mall, Festival Supermall (Muntinlupa), Eastwood Citiwalk 2 (Libis, Quezon City), and SM malls at North Edsa, Fairview, Bicutan, Pampanga, Baguio, Dasmarinas in Cavite and Cagayan de Oro.



DIETHER goes for the Suunto T6 Personal Training and Heart Rate Watch.



BERNARD is wearing Marc Ecko bullet watches with wide cuff links and leather straps.

JERICHO sports a Marc Ecko Dog Tag with polished silver case and flat link chain, and a Marc Ecko watch with covered rhino and wide black leather strap.

Dream watch

IT'S SIX in the morning, and you find the dreamy Piolo Pascual bright-eyed and cheerful, preparing to join a marathon. He signs up at the Timex booth and gets ready—not to run, but to titillate fans on screen as he takes on the role of Eboy for his latest blockbuster "Dreamboy."

Not that Piolo can't actually run in a marathon. In fact, Piolo takes time to stay fit and healthy. And in real and reel life, he always straps on a trusty Timex Sports Watch on his wrist.

The choice of athletes around the world, Timex Advanced Sports Watches can store and analyze key performance indicators and maximize sporting potential.

Timex is the official timepiece of the world-famous Ironman Triathlon race.

The Ironman Triathlon Speed and Distance System harnesses GPS technology to track how far and fast you are running, biking rowing or even skiing. The Heart Rate Monitor helps make the most of your workout by showing the average and maximum heart rate-perfect for training or losing weight. And for water babies, the 200M Timex Reefgear combines brawny construction, 200-meter water resistance, shock resistance and unbelievable value for money.

Timex is a sponsor of "Dreamboy," slated for the big screen on Feb. 9. It also stars Bea Alonzo and Camille Pratts, and is directed by Gilbert Perez for Star Cinema.

TIMEX Reefgear 200m water-resistant watch

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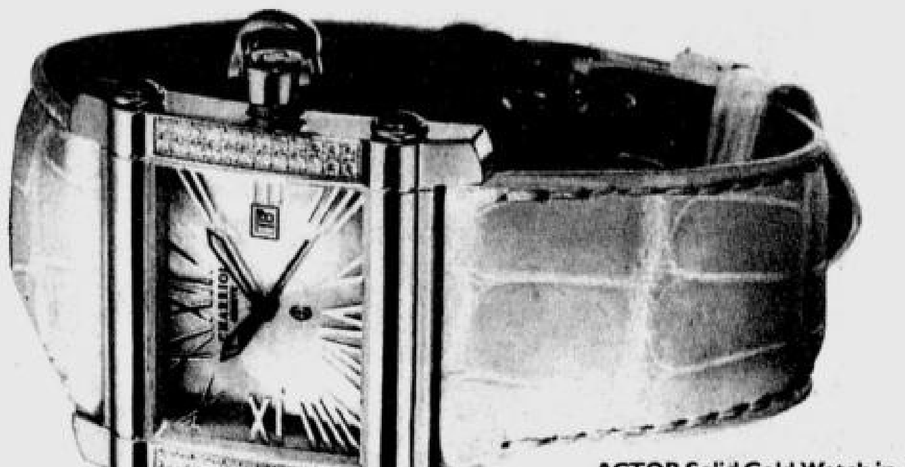
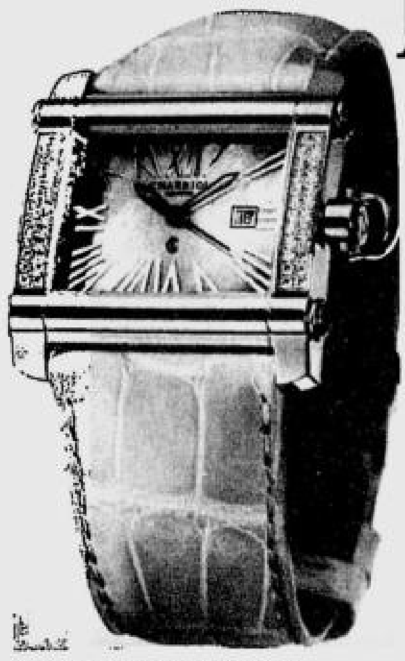


ACTOR Solid Gold Watch in mother-of-pearl dial and ivory alligator strap

When time is gold



ACTOR Solid Gold Watch in mother-of-pearl dial and pink ivory alligator strap

LIKE a sparkling star of Hollywood, solid gold Actor watches catch the eyes of both men and women.

Embellished with diamonds, the watch projects an enchanted radiance of light and shimmer. Its mother-of-pearl dial—partly guilloched or decorated with lightly embossed numerals—and blued hands transform according to the different occasions. The interchangeable crocodile strap adds character to the timepiece.

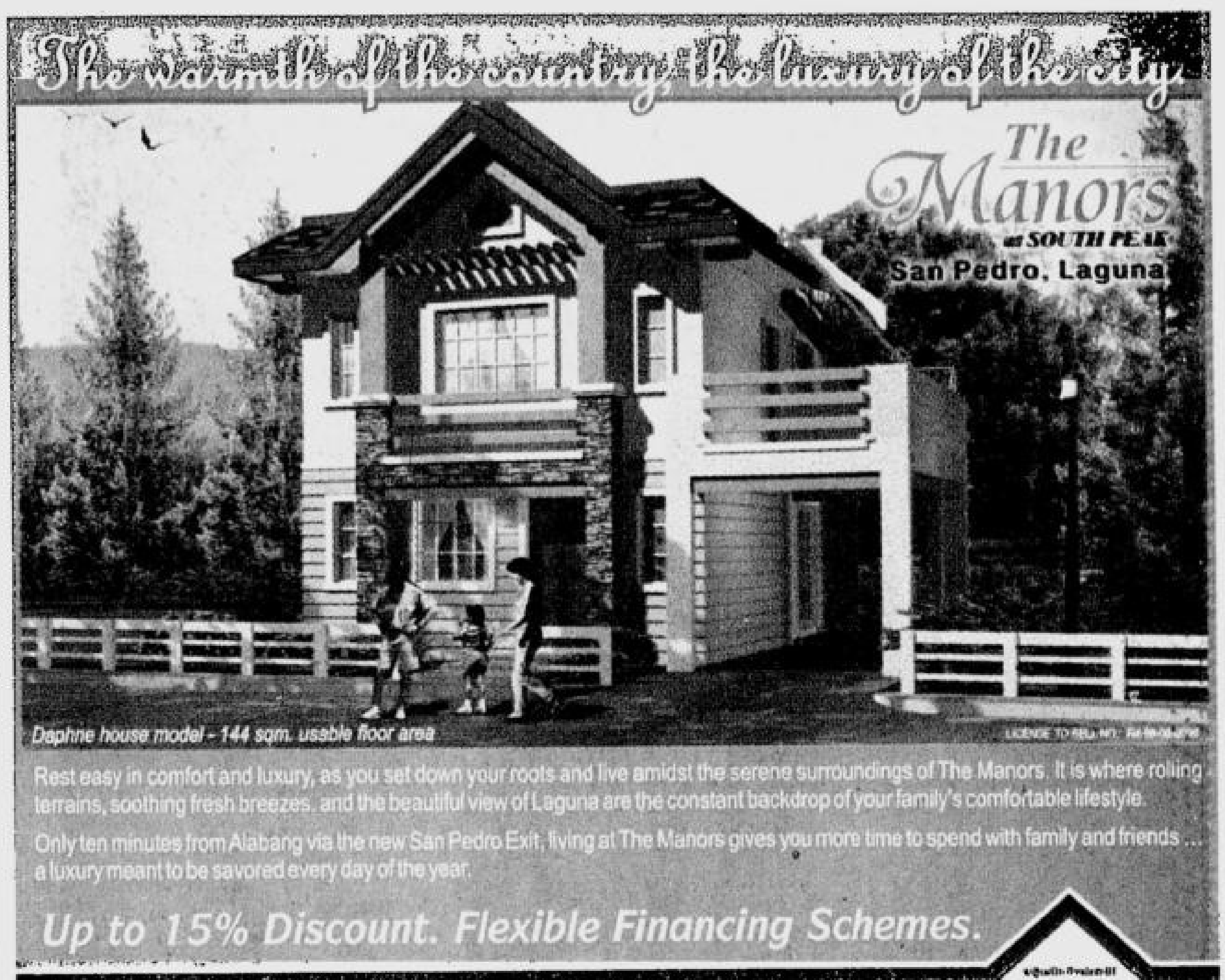
Actor is available in white, yellow and pink gold in two sizes.

Meanwhile, Coralie 18K Gold Jewelry Collection, designed by and named after the daughter of Philippe Charriol, comes in a full range of rings, bangles, pendants and earrings in 18K solid gold.

The design concept of each brilliant jewel in this collection is an imitation of the brand's patented "C" logo.

Charriol is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. at Greenbelt 4, Power Plant Mall, Rustan's Makati, and Rustan's Tower.

GALLERY 925's wide variety of brooches, necklaces, rings, bracelets, pendants and other accessories are made of 92.5 percent sterling silver. The pieces are designed by the resident designer, Dulzzi Gutierrez, and by Mexican designers Mauricio Serrano and Daniel Espinosa. Gallery 925 is at The Podium and Glorietta I.



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Careline Eyeshadow & Lip Palette comes in 10 different hues. Choose a different one for your every mood. **P125.00**

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Careline Lip Balm soothes chapped lips and prevents them from drying. With Vitamin E to effectively moisturize your lips. **P 40.00**

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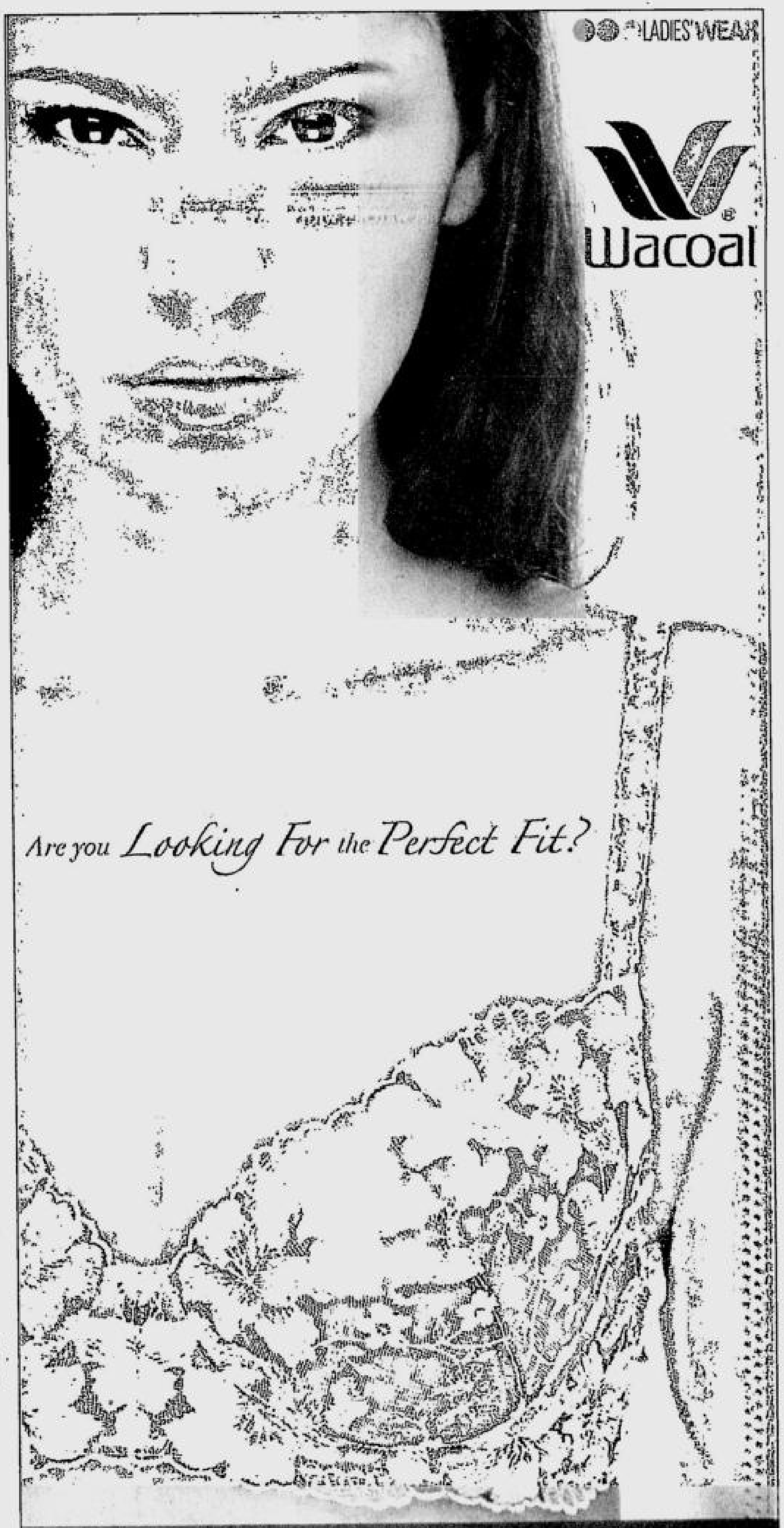

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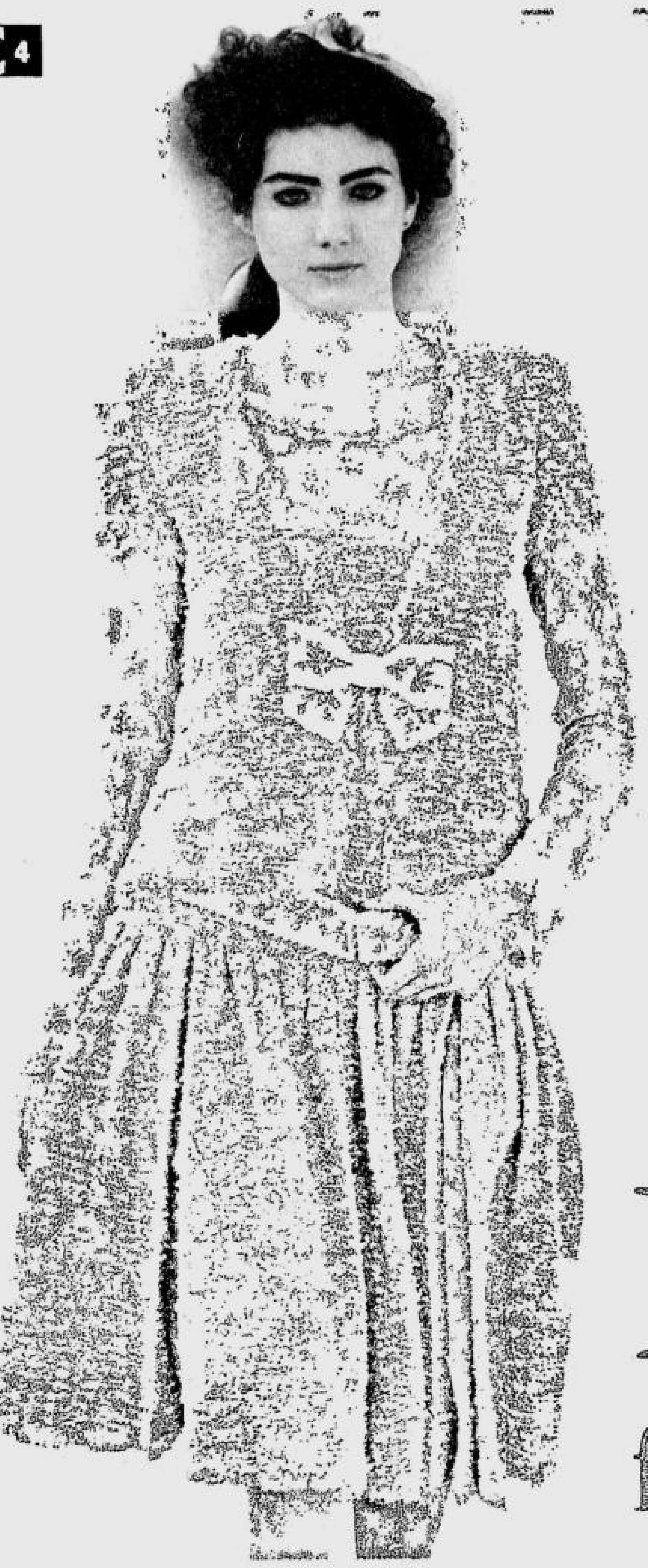
Something for the ladies from Lagerfeld, more color from painterly Lacroix


LAGERFELD JACKY NAEGELEN

LAGERFELD JACKY NAEGELEN

LAGERFELD JACKY NAEGELEN

LACROIX

Ladylike fashion is back!

From page C1

white dress is raised with jet beads.

When he wasn't in the artist atelier, Lacroix was in the boudoir with a harem of very sensual Victorian looks. Chiffon is the fabric of choice, and Lacroix uses it in a variety of ways to flatter without showing much skin.

One dress was asymmetrically draped close to the body in the front but had enough fabric at the back to float in the breeze. In another, the designer dip-dyed multi layers of chiffon in a gradation of soft fruity tones, then ruffled them in the front and left a cascade of layers in the back.

In all, it was one of Lacroix's best shows. Perhaps it was a lovely swan song to LVHM, who, after 17 years with the designer, announced the sale of Christian Lacroix to US-based Falic Group, which has interests in fashion, luxury goods and duty-free retailing. The news was made official on the day of Lacroix's show *(see related story)*.

Couture minimalism

Though Adeline Andre has presented a couture collection as part of the off-calendar shows for several years, this season was her first with the official "Haute Couture" stamp of the Chambre Syndicale de Couture.

The couture minimalist showed dresses, tunics and soft trousers cut in simple, pure shapes resembling the shift dress of the 1960s.

Maurizio Galante, former ready-to-wear designer, turned to the couture market for recognition. He seems to have the technique in hand.

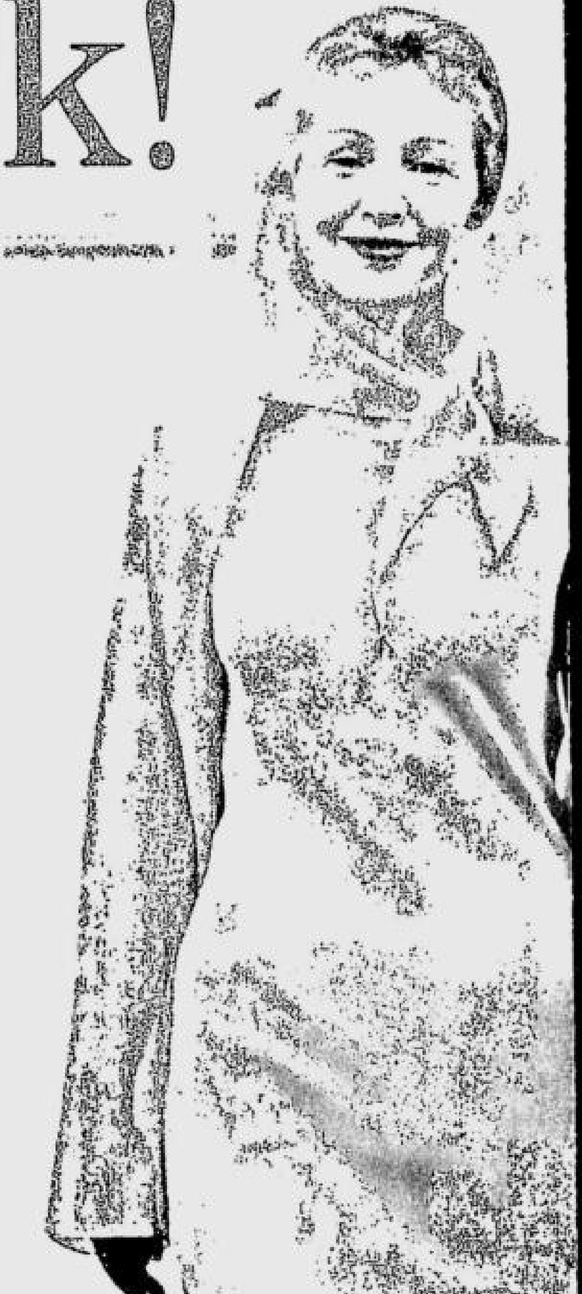
Texture, his forte, was achieved by slashing, pin tucking and embroidering vegetal shapes and surfaces and transforming this art into elaborate tops over simple pants.

Some shirts looked as though he used a paper shredder to slash his fabric. Other tunics were pinched and twisted, resembling air vents over the bust.

AP

LAGERFELD FRANCOIS GUILLOT

GALANTE FRANCOIS GUILLOT


ANDRE

LAGERFELD FRANCOIS GUILLOT

GALANTE FRANCOIS MORI

GALANTE FRANCOIS MORI

GALANTE JEROME DELAY

GALANTE

LACROIX JEAN-PIERRE MULLER

JEAN-PIERRE MULLER

LACROIX FRANCOIS MORI

House of Lacroix sold

PARIS—French designer Christian Lacroix closed a key chapter in his 18-year career on Tuesday as luxury group LVMH said it had sold the loss-making label to a privately held US investment company.

The announcement came minutes after Lacroix won a standing ovation for his spring-summer haute couture collection in Paris, in one of the dramatic plot twists characteristic of the high-stakes universe of fashion.

Cries of "bravo!" greeted the exuberant display of frothy gowns in mouthwatering shades of orange, lemon and fuchsia pink.

A smiling Lacroix put a brave face on the sale, which ends his relationship with LVMH chair Bernard Arnault, the businessman who helped him found the label in 1987 but never managed to make it profitable.

"It's just a tag that is changing, I think the inside of the house will not change," Lacroix told reporters after the show.

"I like question marks. I think it is happening in all the houses, because this is a very exciting time for redefining luxury, a new approach to fashion." The designer, whose contract expires in March, said he would hold discussions with new owner, Falic Group, but he expected to stage his next ready-to-wear display in March as scheduled.

Rumors of the impending deal had caused consternation among guests like best-selling novelist Danielle Steel, amid fears that Paris might be losing one of its best-loved couturiers.

Leon Falic, president of Falic Group, promised to safeguard the couture division, which provides exclusive made-to-measure outfits to clients ranging from New York businesswomen to the Saudi Arabian royal family.

"Haute couture is going to stay, it's the backbone of the brand," Falic said after watching the catwalk display.

"We will never hurt that level but we want to expand on the product line, because we feel that there is so much more that can be done with such a great name and such a great brand, and a great designer." Despite being mired in uncertainty, Lacroix turned out a sterling collection. The former art student let his paintbrush run loose on a white satin coat embellished with green and navy swirls and a yellow and pink marble-print chiffon gown.

British schoolgirl Lily Cole was the picture of innocence in a rosewood taffeta bustier dress with ruffles exploding in the back like the petals of an oversized rose.

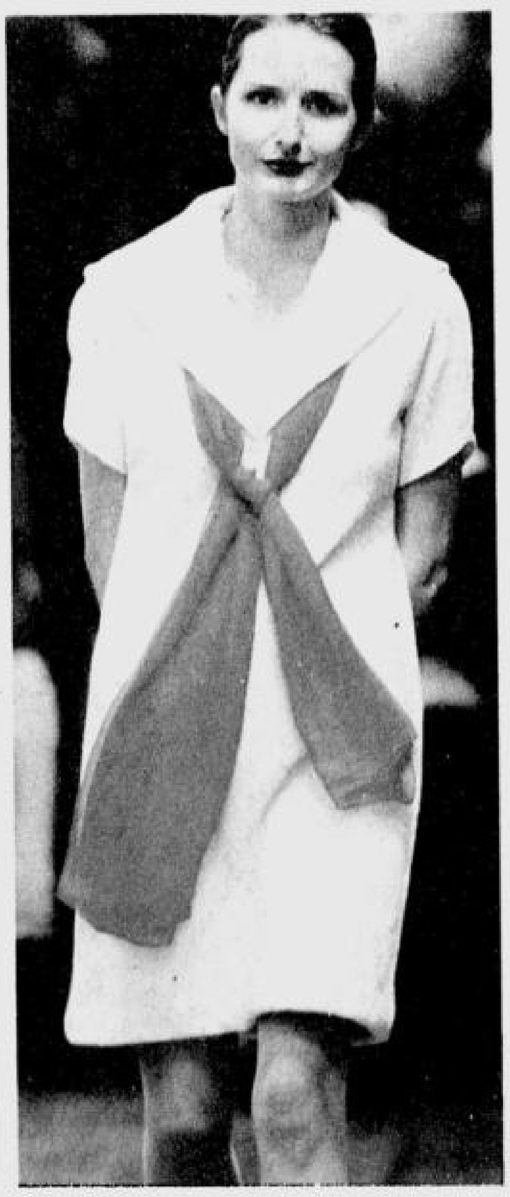
Lily Donaldson, another of the up-and-coming pack of British teenage models, shimmered in an ornate white lace wedding gown.

"It's a bit as if very little girls were borrowing dresses from their grandmother," said Lacroix.

"I enjoyed transforming them like that. I was a bit like Pygmalion, that's what couture is. By wearing a couture dress, you are transformed into who you want to be. It's a bit magic, even if behind it there is an industry and finance." *Reuters*

ANDRE FRANCOIS GUILLOT

CLAUDE PARIS



ANDRE FRANCOIS GUILLOT

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OOH LA LA! *Très* chic Tina Ocampo, Kathy Ong and Kerry Uytengsu

HIP movers Tina Tinio, Celine Lopez and Xeng Zulueta

CLASSIC TRIO. Monique Villonco with Bonnie Gokson and Doris Magsaysay Ho

HIGH FLIERS. Fabrice Poch, jetting in from Hong Kong, with Cartier's Carmen Gomez Menor and businessman Dudo Vaca from Singapore

One, two, three—time to party!

PHILIPPINE Tatler's famille: Blue Carreon, Chit Lijauco, Tatler editor Anton San Diego; elegant Lina Ross, Asian Regional Tatler publisher and CEO, and Sheelah Gullion, senior regional editor, both flying in from Hong Kong; *moi*, lifestyle and society editor; Tatler's GM Lynne Palma and Pierre Calasanz

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by
Alex Van Hagen
using **Kodak Easy Share System**

MANILLE'S crème de la crème came in full tidal-wave force, *palanggas*, as they breezed into the Rizal Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La for one of the highlights of the social season: the third annual Philippine Tatler Ball.

Needless to say, *palanggas*, Tatler's brilliant managing director, that multifaceted woman of substance **Irene Martel Francisco**, was all fired up as she entertained each invited personality for the early evening cocktails.

With my favorite Veuve Clicquot champagne flowing, the guests all admired the backlit sepia photographs of Manille's *alta sociedad* who've graced the pages of Philippine Tatler.

One couldn't miss images of hotshots like **Washington Sycip, Lito** and **Kim Camacho, Bea Zobel, Mai Mai Cojuangco, Meldy Cojuangco, Inno Sotto** and the **Sy** famille, plus others like them, while admiring the décor in the foyer and the ballroom, prepared by the incomparable **Antonio Garcia** of **Mabolo Flowers**, *natch!*

On time

Arriving fashionably on time was tall **Dr. Joerg Breuer** of BMW. Now dahlings, that's German punctuality for you. Prominent couple **Louie** and **Mellie Ablaza** were there, too. The gracious Mellie made it to the second spot in my "Best Hostesses" list, and she profusely thanked the Tatler staff.

Also seen were Makati's first couple, Mayor **Jejomar Binay** with his well-loved wife, **Dr. Elenita B.**, international photographer **Rupert Jacinto** and wife **Tina**, beautiful couple **Fred** and **Kerry Uytengsu, Reina** and **Jerome Tan**, and **Dr. Luciano Ong** and **Helen Ong**.

Jetting in from Cebu were business magnate **Michel Lhuillier** and his wife, super eyecatcher **Amparito**, together with well-known philanthropist and socialite **Mariquita Yeung**, who was a knockout in her fab yellow ball gown.

This was Tatler's biggest ball with the largest attendance so far, with over 400 chichi personalities in one room.

Elegant **Lina Ross**, regional Tatler publisher and CEO, and **Sheelah Gullion**, senior regional editor (both jetting in from Hong Kong for this event), editor **Anton San Diego** and yours truly, the mag's society and lifestyle editor, joined Irene onstage to do a toast of the bubbly, "for Tatler's continued success."

Beneficiary

An important part of the evening was the introduction by Anton and *moi* of the night's beneficiary, the Children's Hour, to belie the notion that the Tatler Ball is just a night of frivolous partying.

Well, *palanggas*, Tatler supports this organization that focuses on poverty-stricken, abused and neglected Filipino children. Speaking on behalf of the organization, **Susana "Chu Chu" Madrigal Eduque** gave a short, touching speech, followed by a performance by the talented Centex children's choir.

TATLER'S "most eligible bachelor" Joel Tantoco with Kai Prieto and Bianca Zobel

HSBC's first couple Julie and Warner Manning

CHILDREN and environment advocate Gina Lopez, former model and Guimaras Gov. Emily Relucio with her husband, southern baron Albertito Lopez

By the end of the evening, a cool P800,000 was raised for the Children's Hour, thanks to kind souls in the audience. In previous years, Philippine Tatler had the Bantay Kalikasan and Philippine Red Cross as beneficiaries.

For a breather, topnotch singer **Bituin Escalante** impressed the crowd with her powerful voice. Demanding "R-E-S-P-E-C-T," she got it with the audience's thunderous applause for her fabulous performance.

Tatler awards

Next on the program was the yearly presentation of the Tatler Awards. Hosting this segment were **Tessa Prieto Valdes** and Anton.

"The 'Most Eligible Bachelor' Award went to a member of the Tantoco clan," they announced. And everybody guessed who it was—**Joel Tantoco**, *naturellement*.

Next, it was the "Most Promising Young Lady" award for society's current "it" gal, and our December 2004 cover girl, **Celine Lopez**, sashayed to the stage in her eye-catching **Rhett Eala** gown.

For living the good life, the "Bon Vivant" award went to—hands down—**Louie Ysmael**.

The "Most Stylish Woman" was easy to choose, she being a perennial fixture on any best-dressed list: **Tina Maristela-Ocampo**, no less, gorgeously garbed in an Inno Sotto.

Bringing some laughter and applause was the winner of the "Most Distinguished Gentleman" award, former Finance Secretary **Lito Camacho**, and he showed he deserved the award with a witty, self-deprecating speech.

Next to be honored were the "Most Prominent Society Couple," which went to *alta* society's respected personalities, **Paeng Hechanova** and his wife **Mely Concepcion**.

"Most Charitable Force" was **Doris Magsaysay-Ho** for both her business and philanthropic endeavors. The night also happened to be Doris' birthday!

IN-DEMAND architect Anton Mendoza and popular model Mark San Diego

"MOST Prominent Society Couple" Paeng and Mely Hechanova

FRENCH Baker's Johnlu Koa and his wife, Escada's Marilou Koa

LE French connection: Sen. Jamby Madrigal and her husband, Monsieur Eric Valade

Business pillar

Finally, it was time to recognize a person who has made an indelible mark in Philippine business. Definitely one of the most respected men in the ballroom, Washington Sycip was called onstage for the "Pinnacle Award." He, too, gave a short speech, made memorable when he quipped he was "drumming up support for the Happy Hour, I mean, Children's Hour." That brought down the house.

Then it was "let's party" time, as the band rocked the dance floor so much that even the country's top concert performer, **Gary Valenciano**, couldn't resist and got up onstage for an impromptu performance.

As in all of Tatler's happenings, the guests went home with lavish Tatler goodie bags, packed my L'Occitane, Christian Dior Parfum and La Mer products, courtesy of Rustan's Essenses, but who else, *n'est-ce pas?*

Our hot sponsors were HSBC Premier, BMW, Globe Platinum, the Makati Shangri-La, Bacchus Wines and the bubbly Veuve Clicquot. Now, isn't this so Tatler?

DENNIS Valdes and his wife Tessa Prieto, with her brother Paolo Prieto

SHANGRI-LA's pride, popular GM Jarlath Lynch with Tatler's managing director Irene Francisco, Cebu socialite Amparito Lhuillier, Asia Tatler's first lady Lina Ross, Singapore society lady Margo Chan and popular cardiologist Randy Francisco

INTERNATIONAL pack: Edouard Mialhe, Sevrine Mialhe, Valerie Courchet and Anthony Courchet

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In celebration of 60 years of organized Ophthalmology in the Philippines, the **Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology (PAO)**, through the active participation of its members, in cooperation with our political leaders, the NGO's and health facilities in the private and public sectors, aims to cure 60,000 Filipinos suffering from cataracts this year.

Organized Philippine Ophthalmology began in 1945 and eventually evolved into the PAO, a non-profit, non-stock corporation composed of duly licensed physicians and board certificate ophthalmologists practicing in the Philippines. The PAO continues to lead the campaign to rebuild the lives of Filipinos by helping bring back their sight and improve their quality of life.

After six decades of unwavering commitment, the PAO continues to serve the Filipino people through its endeavors that rest on an enduring vision...

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Moral/Social *- To assume full moral responsibility for the reduction and prevention of remediable blindness.*

Educational *- To lead in the information dissemination and public education on primary eye care and preventable eye diseases.*

Membership Welfare *- To protect and promote the professional needs of PAO*

Calendar of Activities 2005

- January 26, 2005
  Launch of 60th Anniversary
- March 3, 2005
  PAO Grand Rounds
- July 30 - 31, 2005
  2nd PAO-SERI Research Forum
- August 2005
  August Sight Saving Month
- November 27, 2005
  Interhospital Eye-Q
- November 28 – December 1, 2005
  PAO-AAO Joint Meeting
  EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Manila
- PAO directed monthly medical missions

With more than 1,000 members spread across the archipelago, the PAO has strategically located regional Chapter Societies headed by their respective presidents:

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- Cebu Society - Dr. Mario Dennis E. Amparado
- Central Luzon Society - Dr. Raoul Paolo D. Henson
- Eastern Visayas Society- Dr. Amelia C. Reyes
- Northern Mindanao Society - Dr. Carlo Antonio P. Romero
- Northwestern Luzon Chapter - Dr. Benedict B. Bernal
- Southern Mindanao - Dr. Maximino S. Libre
- Southern Tagalog Society - Dr. Dante Mark D. Udasco
- Western Visayas Academy - Dr. Jeremy M. Saquian
- Cagayan Valley Chapter - Dr. Eduardo R. Martin

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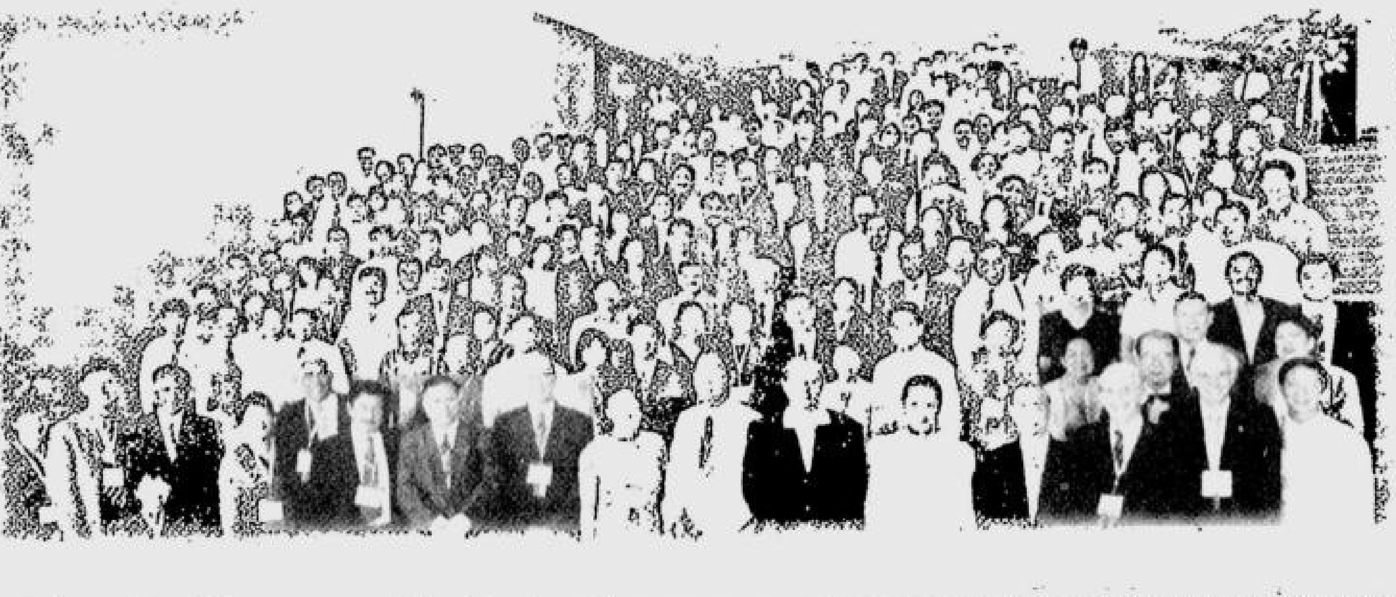

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For more information on Eye Diseases and Eye Doctors in your area, please contact the PHILIPPINE ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY Secretariat by post at Unit 815, 8th Floor, Medical Plaza Makati, Amorsolo cor. Dela Rosa Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City, 1200 Metro Manila; by email, pao@org.ph; or by phone (632) 813-5324 or 813-5318. More information about the PAO can be found in their website: http/www.pao.org.ph.

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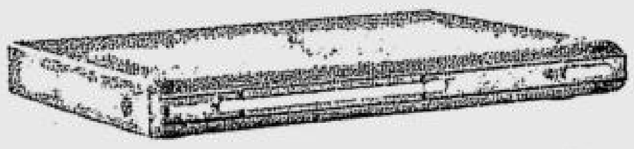

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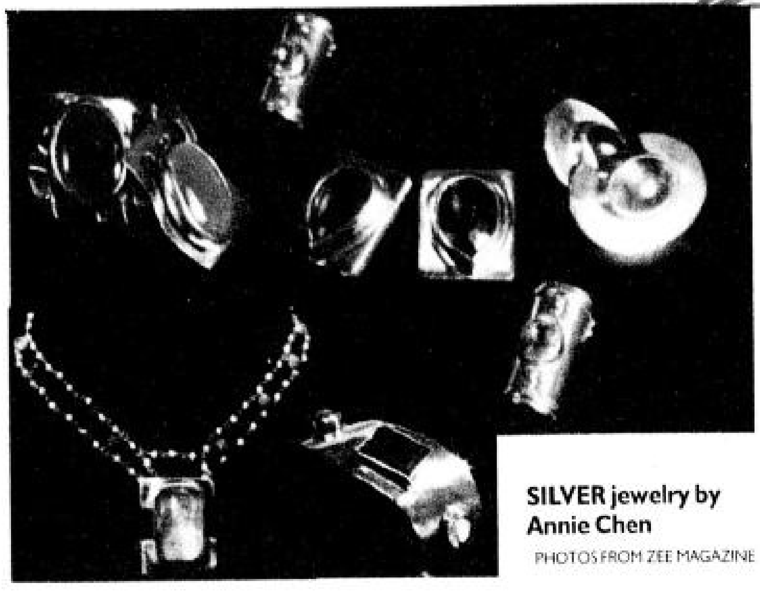

SILVER jewelry by Annie Chen
PHOTOS FROM ZEE MAGAZINE

Cebuanos' acute sense of home

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

CEBU was still flushed from the massive success of Sinulog when we settled down in the vast ballroom of Waterfront Hotel for cocktails.

Margot Osmeña, the indefatigable woman also known as the mayor's wife, was talking about the attendance of millions to Cebu's annual lure and how a hardly known city in Mindanao, Tangub, won the best performance. The other women chirped in that indeed, this must have been the best Sinulog, if it's fair at all to pick a best year.

> We make yet another design find in this city whose people have sense of pride

Listening to Cebuanos, you realize how they're different from the rest of the country—they're unabashedly proud to be Cebuanos. While other Filipinos have been into self-bashing for so long now it seems chronic, the Cebuanos have that old-fashioned, even giddy, sense of pride in their hometown, whether it be their resorts, furniture makers or *lechon*.

It rubs off on you; the likes of Waterfront general manager **Marco Protacio** already feels like he's a Cebuano.

Its malls are so here and now, yet there's something about Cebu that remains quaint and Old World. People still know each other, and run into each other event after event. The community remains that cozy and close-knit.

Metro Society writer **Maricris Encarnacion**, who's been based in Cebu since she got married in the mid-'90s, hilariously declared over dinner, "It's harder for men to fool around here because you'll be found out in less than two hours. News travels that fast." What was more amusing was that the men at our table agreed.

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Indeed Cebuanos are cocooned in Cebu, even as they're quick to shop or do business in Metro Manila or elsewhere. They have this acute sense of home.

"Perhaps it's because we were left out during

CEBUANOS/ D2

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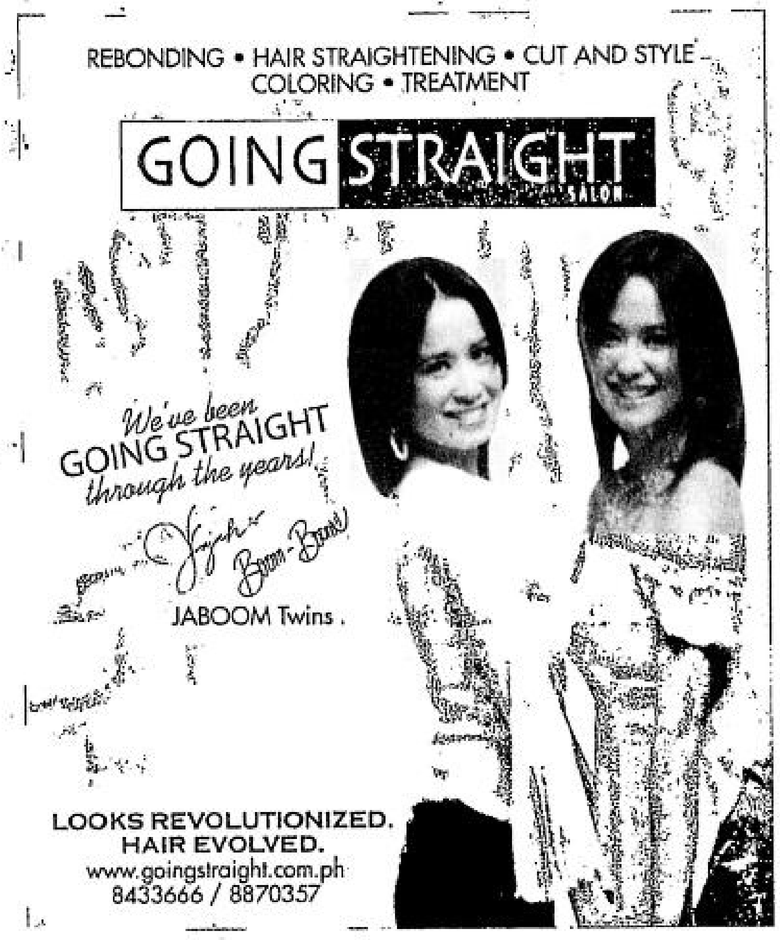

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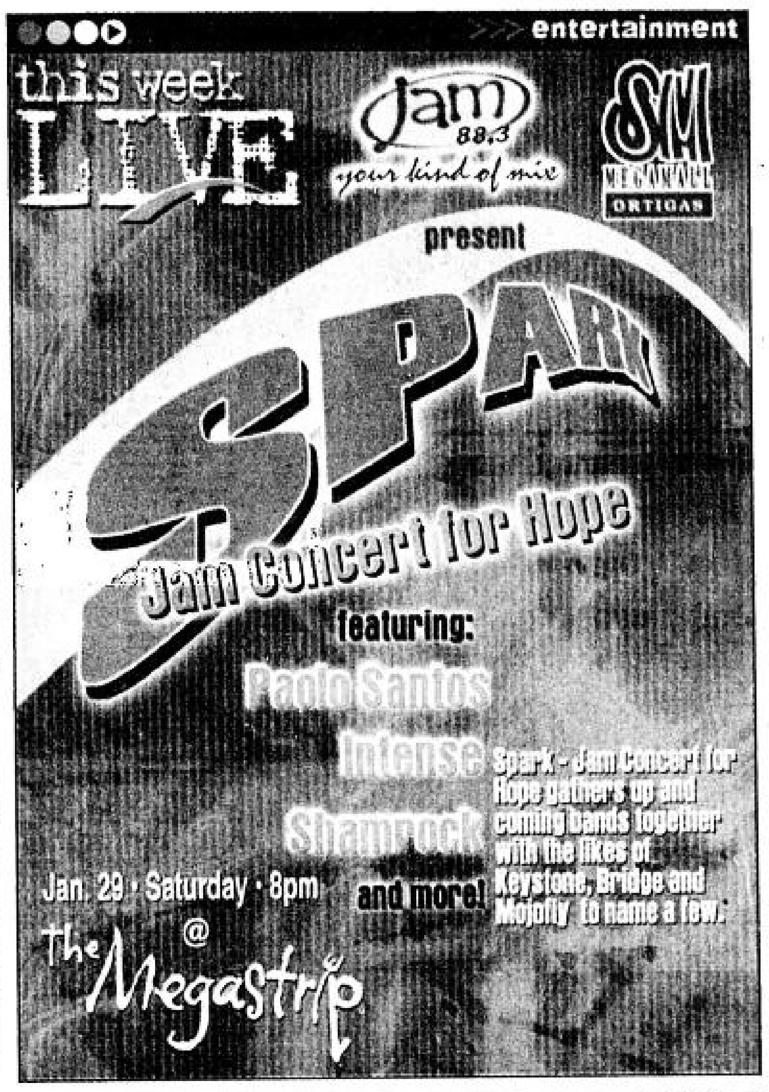

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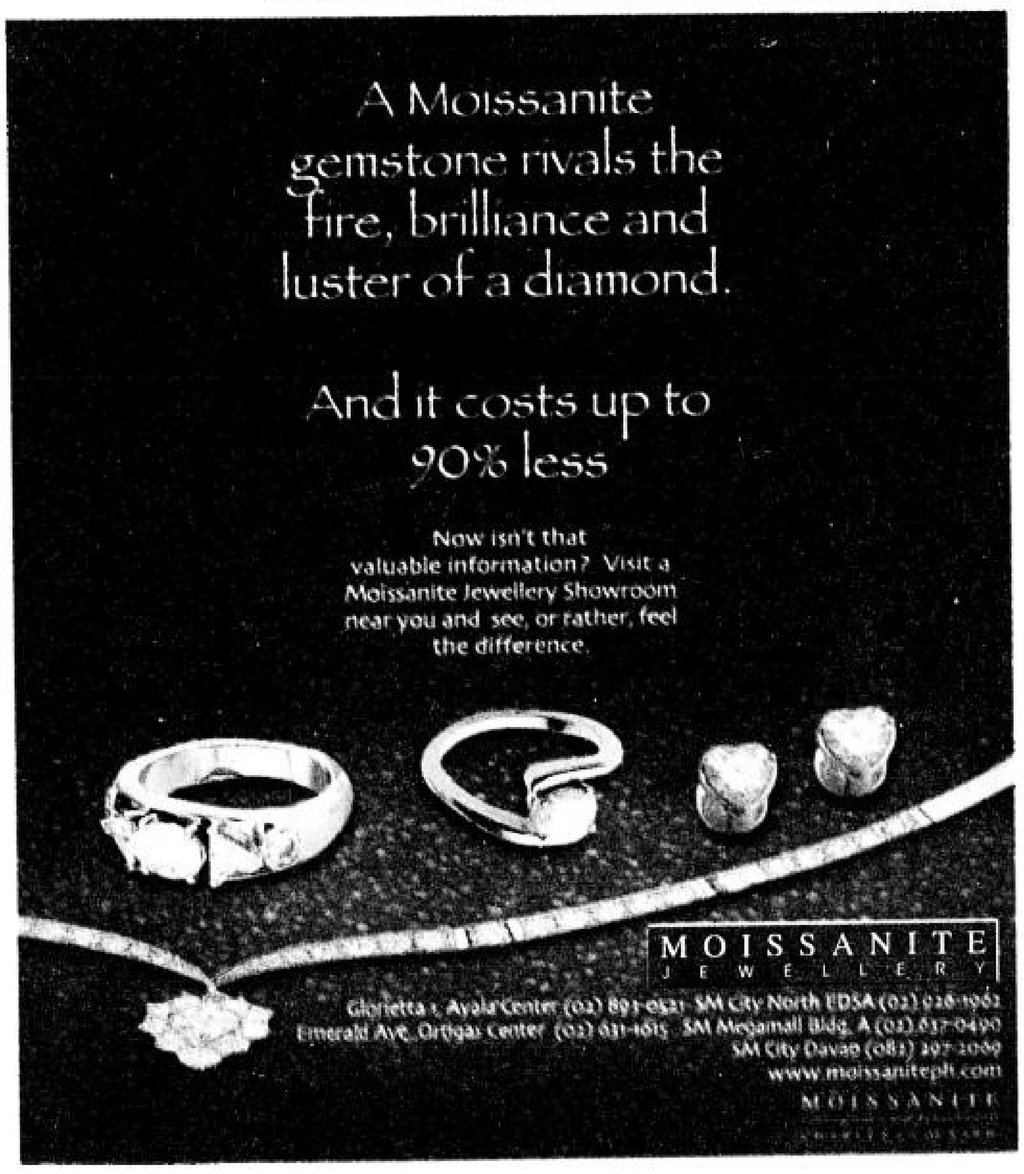

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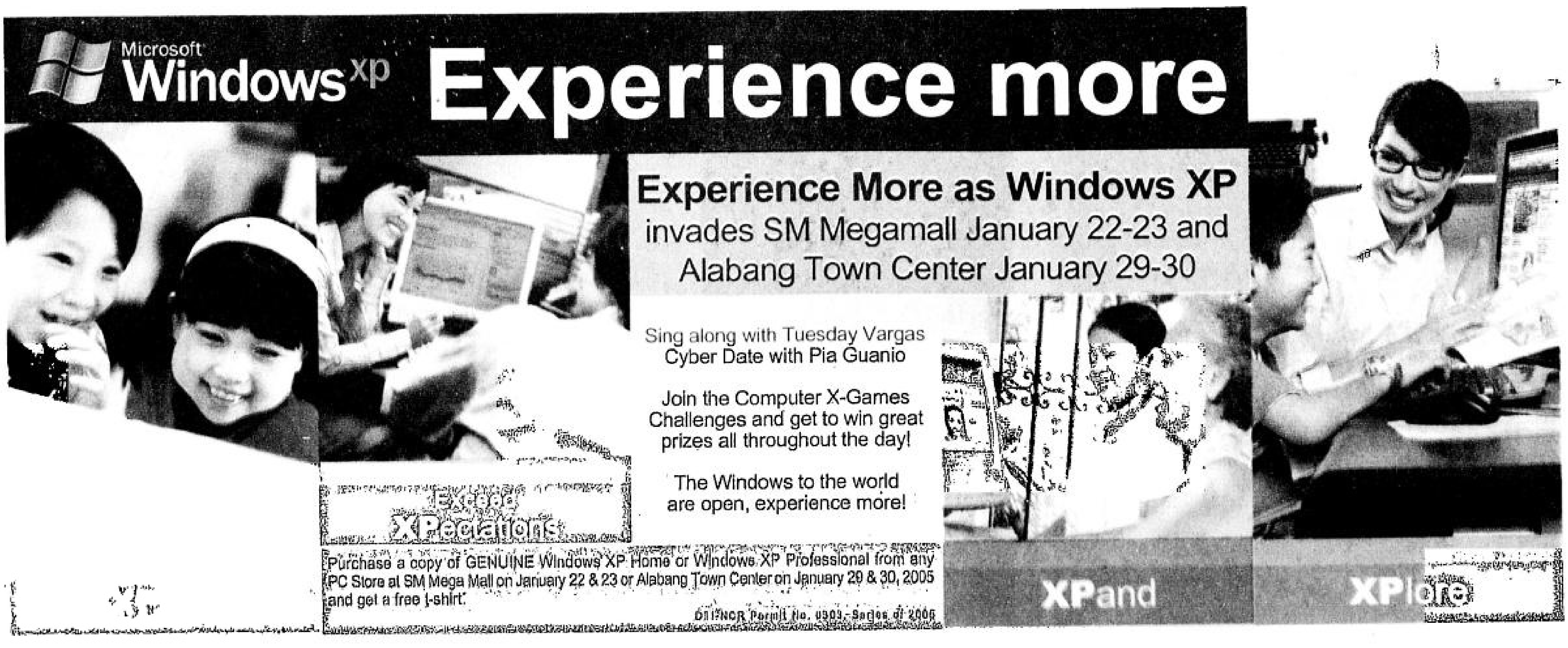

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CEBU Gov. Gwen Garcia and Marissa Fernan

TERESING Mendezona and Margot Osmeña

WATERFRONT Hotel and Casino-Lahug GM Marco Protacio and Arcy Gayatin

Cebuanos' acute sense of home

From page D1

the Marcos years," Cebu high society doyenne **Teresing Mendezona** said, trying to explain why Cebuanos are self-sustaining, why they stick together and are proud of their roots and resources.

Good mix

So they were all there Tuesday last week at Waterfront during the Cebu launch of Metro Society—a good power mix of the Chinese and mestizo Cebuanos, of political protagonists, of young and senior generations.

Apart from Margot Osmeña, there was Cebu Gov. **Gwen Garcia** with fellow Theresian **Marissa Fernan**, who also brought along her mom **Elo**, sister **Marget**, brother **Mike** and his wife **Joyce**.

It was a good chance for the Fernans to touch base with visiting **Ernie Lopez**, whose dad, the late **Geny**, was a good friend of Marissa's late dad, the former Chief Justice and Senate president **Marcelo Fernan**. There were also the **Aboitizes—Chari, Annie, Bernie.**

Douglas and **Anabelle Luym** made a rare social appearance for daughter **Amanda**, who is among Metro's talented photographers.

Guests sauntered around the ballroom stylishly set up with blooms by **Rose Amores**. Obviously, Waterfront's Marco left no stone unturned in giving Metro Society a rousing welcome to Cebu, no matter that the huge hotel was a beehive that week because of the 3rd Global Pinoy Networking Conference.

Society editors **Lia Bernardo, Raul Manzano, Glenna Aquino** and **Marichelle Ligon** worked the room helped by bosom Metro friends Marissa, Teresing, **Jaime Picornell** and **Nelia Neri**.

Ecstatic over Monique

Of course, **Amparito Lhuillier** was around, with husband Michel. Amparito remains ecstatic about the continuing success of daughter **Monique** in fashion, the first Filipino fashion designer to have broken into world fashion.

Apart from her stores in L.A. and Minneapolis, Monique is opening in New York—perfect for her Hollywood clientele in the East Coast led by **Sarah Jessica Parker**. A story on Monique comes out this week in Newsweek.

Shangri-La Mactan's **Neil Rumbaoa** and **Jaja Chiongbian** hopped over from their resort property, which was packed that week with Korean, Japanese and Chinese guests, to join the launch.

The designers came in full force—**Philip Rodriguez, Oj Hofer, Arcy Gayatin, Protacio Empaces**, who introduced us to the upcoming ones. Fashion accessory designer **Michiel Ansigh** came with **Debbie Enriquez**.

Kenneth Cobonpue came with wife **Susan**. Kenneth is the Filipino furniture designer who continues to win acclaim abroad and gets featured in prestigious design books. The latest feature on him is in the International Design Yearbook 2004 where the editor **Tom Dixon** wrote: "The Philippines, over the last few years, has produced an outpouring of ethnic design. Utilizing traditional local material such as wicker, rope and wood they have produced furniture which seems to echo the lines of ancient rafts and boats. For such a remote location, they have had an impact on the design scene."

New talent

The next evening, over dinner with Marissa, Governor Gwen and Teresing, we were to discover another Cebu talent, **Annie Chen**.

Like the governor, Marissa and Teresing, Annie was a graduate of St. Theresa's Cebu. What perhaps many don't know is that since Gwen ran for governor, her fellow Theresians have not only closed ranks behind her but have also helped her with "housekeeping details" in the Provincial Capitol building.

Teresing isn't called the "Martha Stewart of Cebu" (before jail, of course) for nothing. She helped out with the food and décor that night for the hundreds of participants to the Global Pinoy Networking conference. This dynamic team is prettifying the vintage building whose architecture is beautiful to begin with, with its vast courtyard and dome.

Annie, based in Singapore with husband **Christopher Fussner** and three kids, designs silver jewelry with a chic mix of semi-precious stones, minerals, crystals and beads. Her jewelry is sculptural, innovative, contemporary yet classic with clean and sharp lines. She has a gallery/store in Singapore where she has a growing market.

P4M in a night

We know of at least one man who virtually moved heaven and earth to raise P4 million for the Philippine General Hospital, and he's neither a politician nor a PGH official. Dr. **Greg Alvior** is an OB-Gyne who had a flourishing practice in New York for 30 years until he retired here a few years ago.

He's well-known among his neighbors in Ayala Alabang for his magnificent way with gardens. His house has a lush, natural garden, but his green thumb didn't end there. He built a garden along the creek down his road so that it's now a veritable park.

As a UP Medicine alumnus, he was persuaded by fellow alumni to head the PGH Medical Foundation Inc. a few years ago. Little did he know the blood, sweat and tears that awaited him in the performance of such task. He didn't cop out anyway.

He tapped his network and last November held a fundraising bash featuring the 100-piece collection of his close friend, **Pitoy Moreno**. For 20 years now, Pitoy has been offering his collections for big fundraisers of PGH.

The charity event meant to support the free medicine program for indigent patients and the renovation of the hospital's main pharmacy. **Robert Seña, Isay Alvarez** and **Pinky Marquez** also performed.

For his part Pitoy did 100 Philippine costume-inspired numbers, many of them new.

This, a month after his milestone show at CCP. Pitoy really had a marathon performance late last year. With events chair **Lolita Escobar Mirpuri** and Alay sa PGH Fund Drive chair **Cory Quirino**, Dr. Alvior was able to fill 900 seats at the Westin, at P2,500 a plate. That was no mean task.

Since he decided to come home and settle down here, Dr. Alvior has been wanting to give back to his country. That's what happens when a man has time on his hands—and generosity in his heart.

I should know; he beats me in tennis—regularly. (That's where he's not at all generous with points.)

Double-duty dressing

THE LATEST issue of Mega magazine gives more ways to up your points in the fashion world.

Mega fashion assistant Maureen Disini picks out three favorite evening pieces—the bustier, the cocktail dress and satin details—and brings them up to the light of day.

Consider wearing a form-flattering bustier instead of a long-sleeved polo or cotton shirt under a suit for a corporate appeal. It definitely gives a fresh twist to dressing for work, especially after changing a few accessories. The bustier can also work its way into your casual Friday dress code by pairing it with denim jeans and loafers.

For those who can't seem to figure how to wear satin during the day, here's a suggestion: counter the shine and glamour factor by matching it with either a top or a bottom in textured fabric and in whimsical hues like pink or lavender.

As for the cocktail dress, let it see the sun shine by taming it with a denim blazer and a tote or even a simple cardigan, but in a cheerful color like green or yellow for a casual-chic vibe.

Mega magazine is a publication of Mega Magazines & Publications Inc. Now available in all leading bookstores and newsstands nationwide. Call 6312859.

LILAC knit cardigan with satin buttons by Chocolate Clothing Company, black cotton tube top from Greenhills *tiangge*, black satin pencil-cut skirt by The Black Shop, purple ankle straps stilettos by Nine West, black satin clutch with faux diamonds by Tod's

BROWN chiffon pleated dress with pink belt by BCBG Maz Azria at Rustan's, pink cotton cardigan with antique lace and rhinestone buttons by Trina Turk at Mix, gold watch by Visage at Rustan's

PINK cotton blazer by The Black Shop

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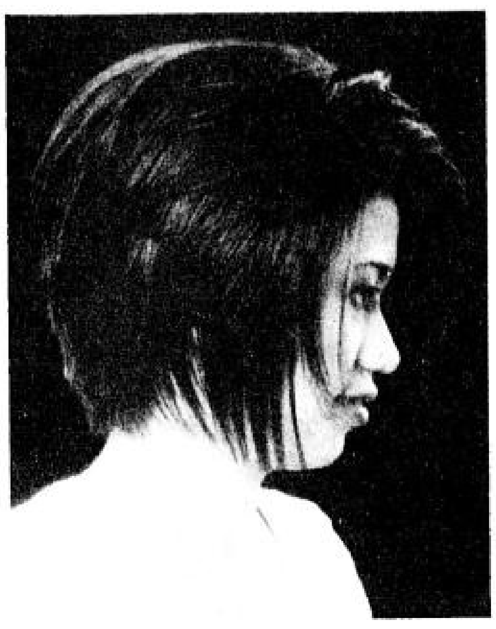
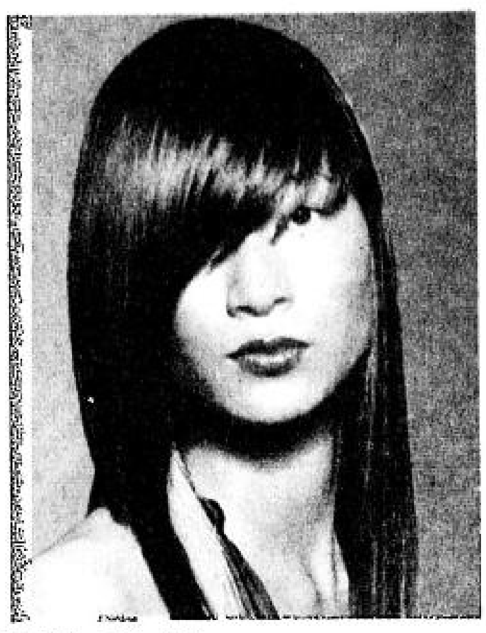
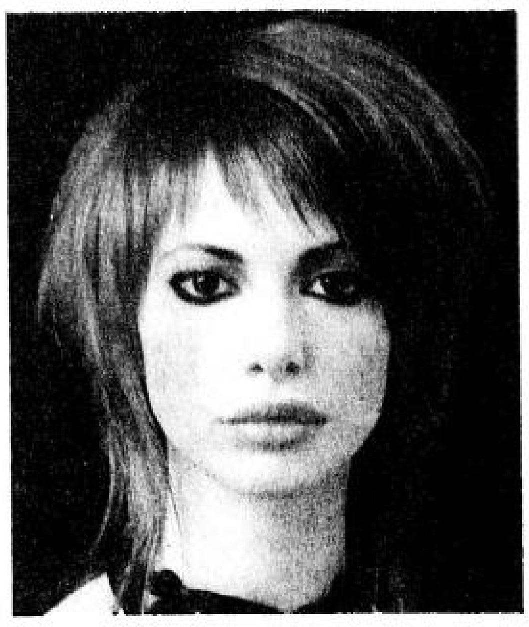


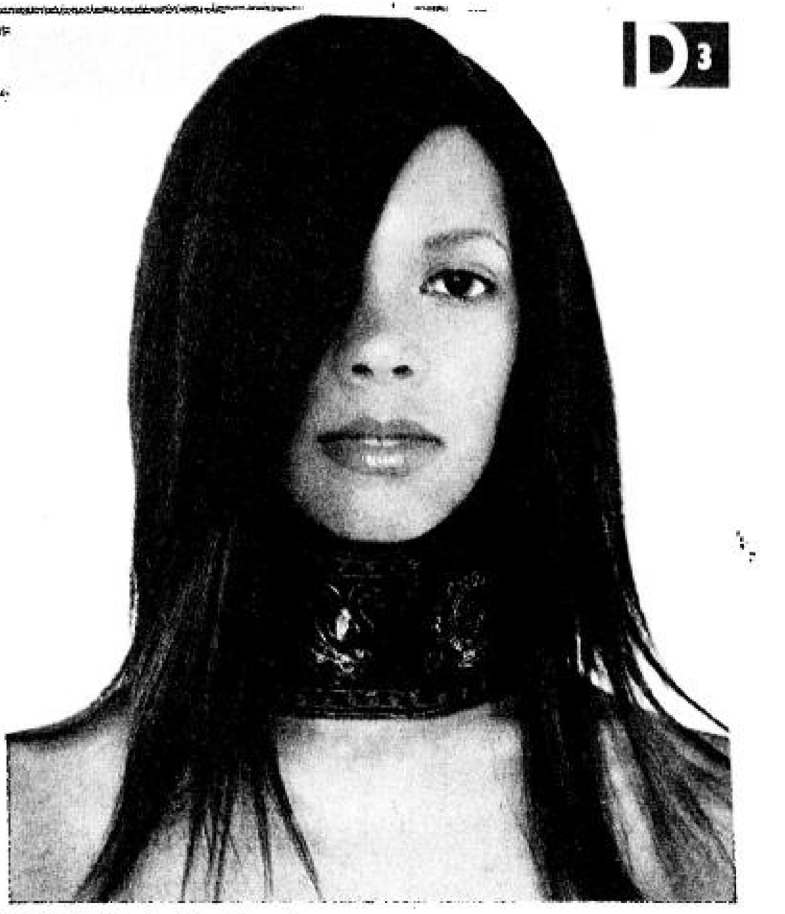
LAYERED one-sided bob



SLEEK and straight



TAPERED shag



TEXTURED shoulder length

Look slimmer with the right 'do

HAIR guru Tony Galvez reveals style secrets that help you acquire a slimmer, more svelte appearance:

- Choose the right length and it can make all the difference to your look.
- Avoid very short 'dos, as they have a reputation for being aging, severe and drawing unwanted attention to chins and cheeks.
- Add height to a short style and choose short looks with height at the root to lengthen your face.
- Mid-length styles are often the best length for adding a feminine touch to your look; a sexy shoulder-skimming bob will look flattering on most people.
- Keep your hair to about three inches below the shoulder and no longer. Very long hair will swamp you and can dominate pretty eyes and cherubic lips. Very high ponytails can age you 10 years in seconds.
- Find a style to suit your hair type and lifestyle.
- The sleek, straight looks of the moment are perfect for slimming down the face. They add chic edges, enhance cheekbones and can even hide wobbly chins.
- Soft, graduated layers at the end of the hair are perfect for flattering chins and help bring out those cheekbones. Be sure to minimize volume and texture at ear level to slim the face.
- Don't go for square- or pear-shaped styles that highlight the jaw. Avoid big curls if you don't want to plump up your face. And remember, side-parting the hair takes attention away from a large forehead.

Galvez picks four hairstyles of different lengths and styles to illustrate these points.

The Tony Galvez Salon is at The Tony Galvez Centrum, 124 9th Ave. near corner P. Tuazon Blvd., Araneta Center, Cubao, QC. Call 9134370/9133953, e-mail tgalvez117@yahoo.com or visit www.tonygalvez.com.ph

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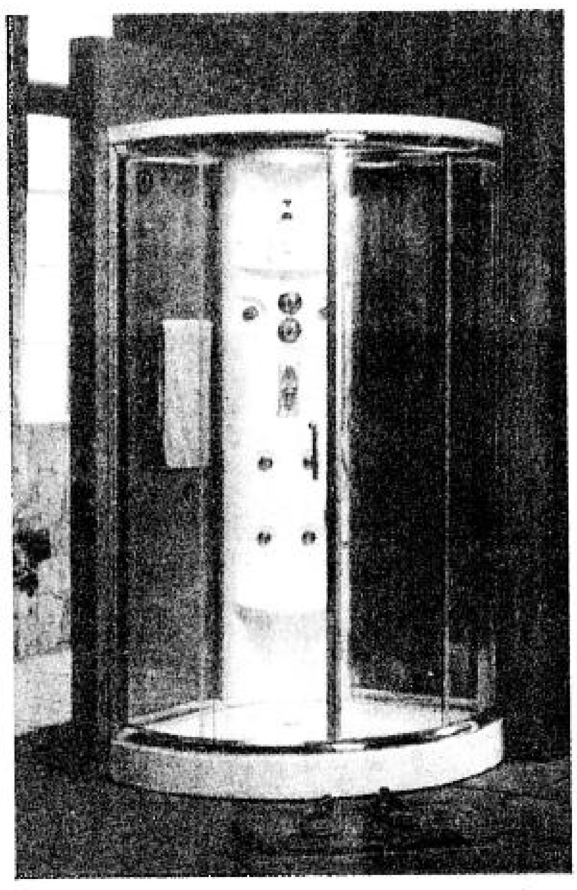

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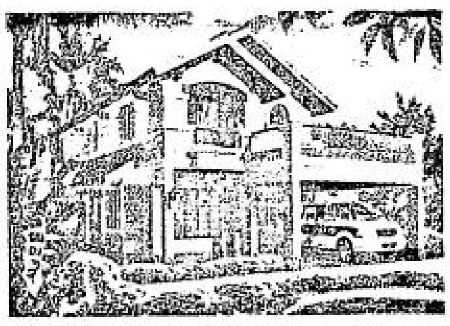

Maia Alta
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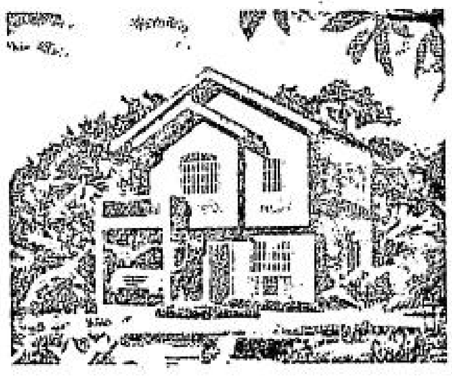

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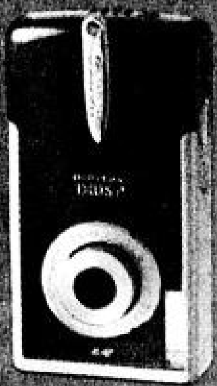

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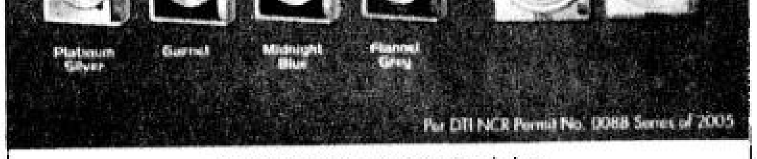

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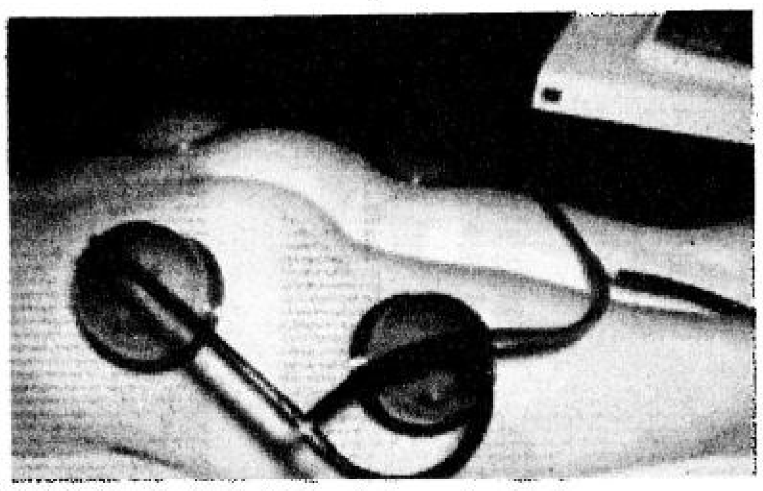


STARVAC for lifting and tightening buttocks

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

FORGET the June bride cliché, most everyone in the Philippines chooses to marry in cool January.

That's understandable for the bride, who is probably dropping the pounds with the hectic pace of wedding preparations and will look hot on her big day.

But what about the rest of us? We all swear to practice self-control, but the moment December hits with all its decadent Christmas party spreads and buffets, we give way.

Gym attendance also drops because we still have to work by day and attend a Christmas party right after, so there really is no time for honest-to-goodness workouts.

I had a wedding to attend on Jan. 2, and a dress that fit me to perfection three weeks before wouldn't even zip up. Thank goodness I found a good reason not to attend, as I had to go on an out-of-town trip.

There were other wedding invitations to go to, though, and I knew my diet and exercise wouldn't make it on time for the next event. So I ran to the Belo Medical Center for help to lose the water weight and tone up as fast as I could.

The Lipolight machine was booked solid, so I turned to the clinic's other alternatives.

The Body Scrub with Bleach treatment sloughed off my dry dead skin, blackheads, whiteheads and minor zits on my back. The bleaching lotion softened my skin and evened out my skin tone's minor blotchiness.

Ionithermie is my favorite treatment, but it may be on the way out with the success of Mesotherapy and Lipolight. It firms, tones and drains excess fluids instantly.

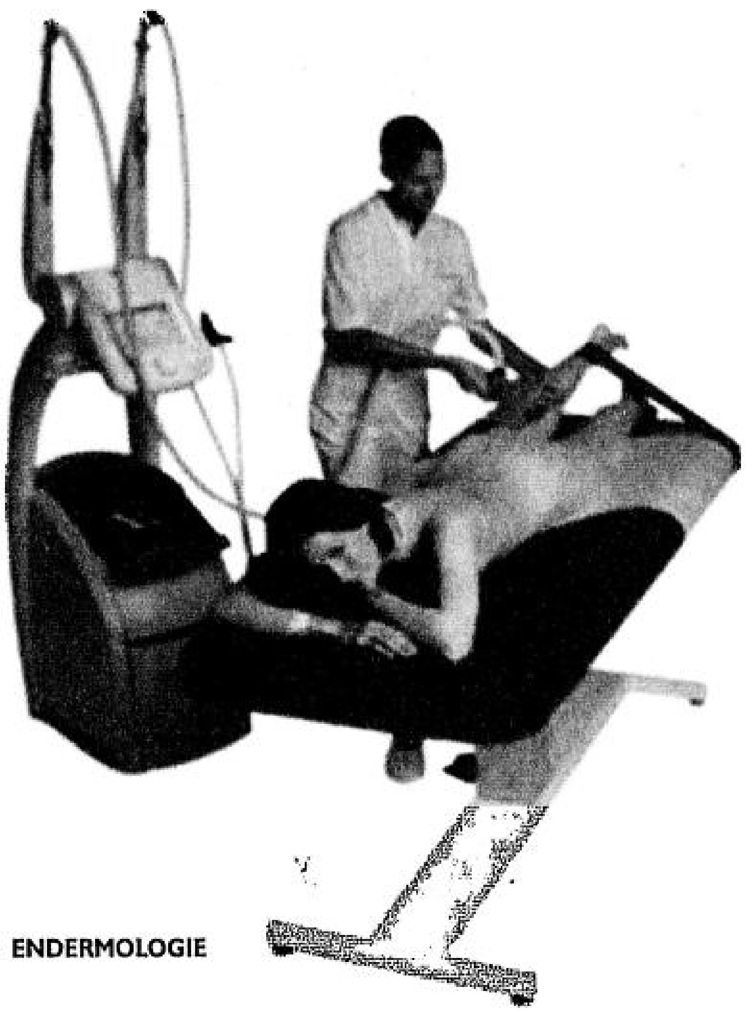
You are made to lie on a slightly hot mat, some cold seaweed mask is slapped on you and a mat is placed over your stomach. Then you are connected to a machine that gives out galvanic and faradic currents to stimulate blood and lymphatic circulation and contracts your muscles on the stomach, thigh, hip and buttocks, as if you're exercising.

When the treatment ends, you see so much perspiration on the mat. Just to show you how much of it was water weight—I lost an inch-and-a-half around my waist and hip area. My thighs lost about .75 inches each.

This was only my first session, and my pants, which were bursting beforehand, could now fit a finger in between the waistband.

Endermologie was the next treatment I tried. Ionithermie may have shrunk my thighs and buttocks and significantly reduced my cellulite, but some were still stubbornly visible even without pinching.

Endermologie is a 35-minute procedure that involves putting a body stocking on you and suctioning and massaging the affected area. It eliminates cellulite and also firms and tones the whole body while improving circulation. I also offered my arms for firming, and the stubborn cellulite on my thighs and butt became less obvious.



ENDERMOLOGIE

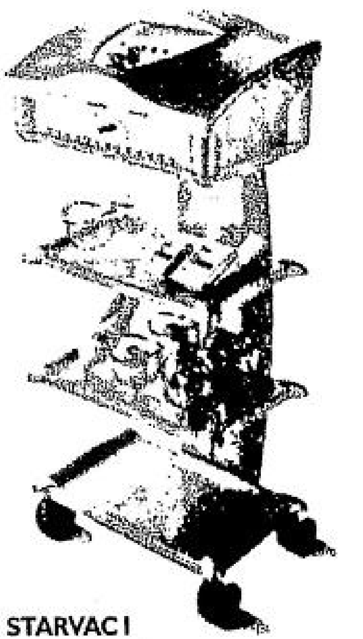
These treatments are no substitute for exercise, but they do help you slim down a bit

Starvac. My lack of exercise really showed in specific body parts which needed lifting. Starvac uses bell-shaped suction cups that are attached to a vacuum-like machine. Originally used to tighten facial muscles will smaller suctions, bigger suctions were discovered to lift and tighten sagging buttocks so they looked fuller but compact, with thighs appearing longer.

One more thing it is famous for is firming sagging breasts temporarily. Those who complete the 12-treatment program can gain as much as one full cup size in their bras.

As I didn't have much time, I had them put the machine on a higher setting, and it felt like a giant hand was pinching my behind.

The next wedding day I went to, people were saying I looked great and didn't gain at all during the holidays. What they didn't know was, I hadn't eaten that day because I was in the clinic for five hours taking in all the treatments so my dress would fit perfectly!

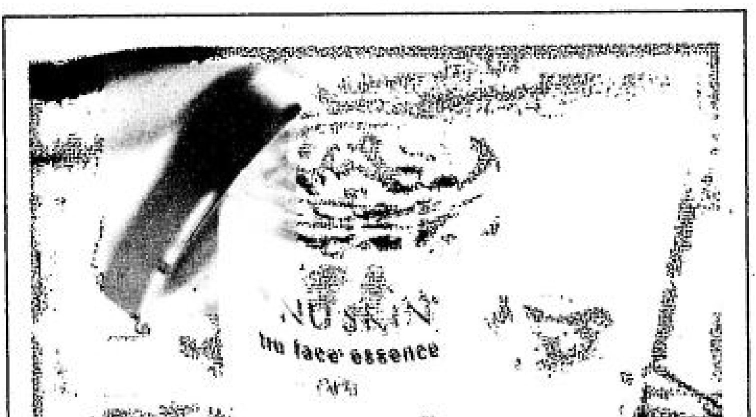


STARVAC I

A caveat: These programs are not meant to replace exercise. I still do 45-60 minutes of aerobics a day and stay away from carbohydrates and sugar.

Call the Belo Medical Clinic at 8442939 or e-mail info@belomed.com

E-mail author at kinnysalas@yahoo.com



NU Skin Tru Face Essence capsules

Solutions to signs of aging

TRU Face, a premium personal care product line manufactured by Nu Skin, is the answer to wrinkles, crow's feet, sagging chins and jaw lines and other manifestations of aging on the face.

Tru Face Revealing Gel is the next generation anti-aging technology that delicately reveals smooth and youthful looking complexion. The gluconolactone contained in this formula improves skin texture, refining pores as it gently penetrates skin.

It also has lactobionic that stimulates skin cell renewal while improving skin brightness and texture. With daily use, skin will be fairer, more radiant and protected from aging factors such as dehydration, dryness and stress.

For sagging chins and jaw lines, Nu Skin recommends Tru Face Essence Firming Serum. Enriched with age-defying Ethocyn, it blocks the intrinsic signs of aging by helping restore the skin's natural elastin level—a key component to firm, healthy skin. This product also revives the skin's firmness and contours the chin and jaw line for a more defined, youthful appearance.

Lastly, the pro-collagen peptides in Tru Face Line Corrector not only help soften moderate to deep and fine lines, but also reverse their appearance without surgery. With regular use, your face will become more supple, smooth and refined.

For best results, use the Tru Face line as a system or individually, depending on your skin condition. These products are exclusively marketed in the Philippines through Nu Skin's local affiliate, Nu Skin Philippines Inc.

Call 6890333 or visit www.nuskin.com.ph.

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2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

EDDIE Baddeo poses with top model Marina Benipayo, who is dressed in a 1980s-inspired wedding gown reminiscent of Joan Collins in "Dynasty."

Eddie Baddeo

Signature style: Haute couture and avant garde, "always made-to-order with interesting lines, always designed and executed with feelings and emotions."

Years in the business: 18

Price range: Flexible, depending on the budget of the client, the design and the fabric.

Advice to brides-to-be: "Always be comfortable with your choices. Consider your budget, venue, time and other such matters. You must also have good rapport with the designer of your choice."

Backstage at the 'Wedding March'

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

IT'S been ages since I last stepped on the catwalk to do a fashion show. So, when director Raymond Villanueva called me to do the finale number for the INQUIRER's bridal fashion show, aptly titled "Wedding March," I was floored, to say the least.

I didn't think thirty-somethings like me should still be playing the blushing bride up onstage, but Raymond was very convincing.

Of course, it helped that I was to don a wedding gown by Auggie Cordero, undeniably one of the best designers ever.

And then, there was the lure of working with a whole group of artists such as makeup artist Patrick Rosas and designers Mike dela Rosa, Loretto and Frederick Peralta, to name a few.

Naturally, I took the opportunity to pick these creative minds so I may provide brides-to-be with some useful information that can help them prepare for their big day.

So, in between rehearsals, makeup and the fashion show, I managed to interview and photograph most of the participating designers. Here are some trivia, comparative statistics and what they have to say:

BACKSTAGE/ E2

> I took the opportunity to pick creative minds at the fair so I may provide brides-to-be with some useful information

TO ACHIEVE the '20s look, Mike dela Rosa masterfully worked with crepe and chiffon tastefully adorned with ribbons and tassels.

Mike dela Rosa

Signature style: Simple lines and soft tailoring

Years in the business: 26

Advice to brides-to-be: "Choose a design that will look good on you. Don't go with what current fashion or the designer will dictate. Choose a design you're comfortable with."

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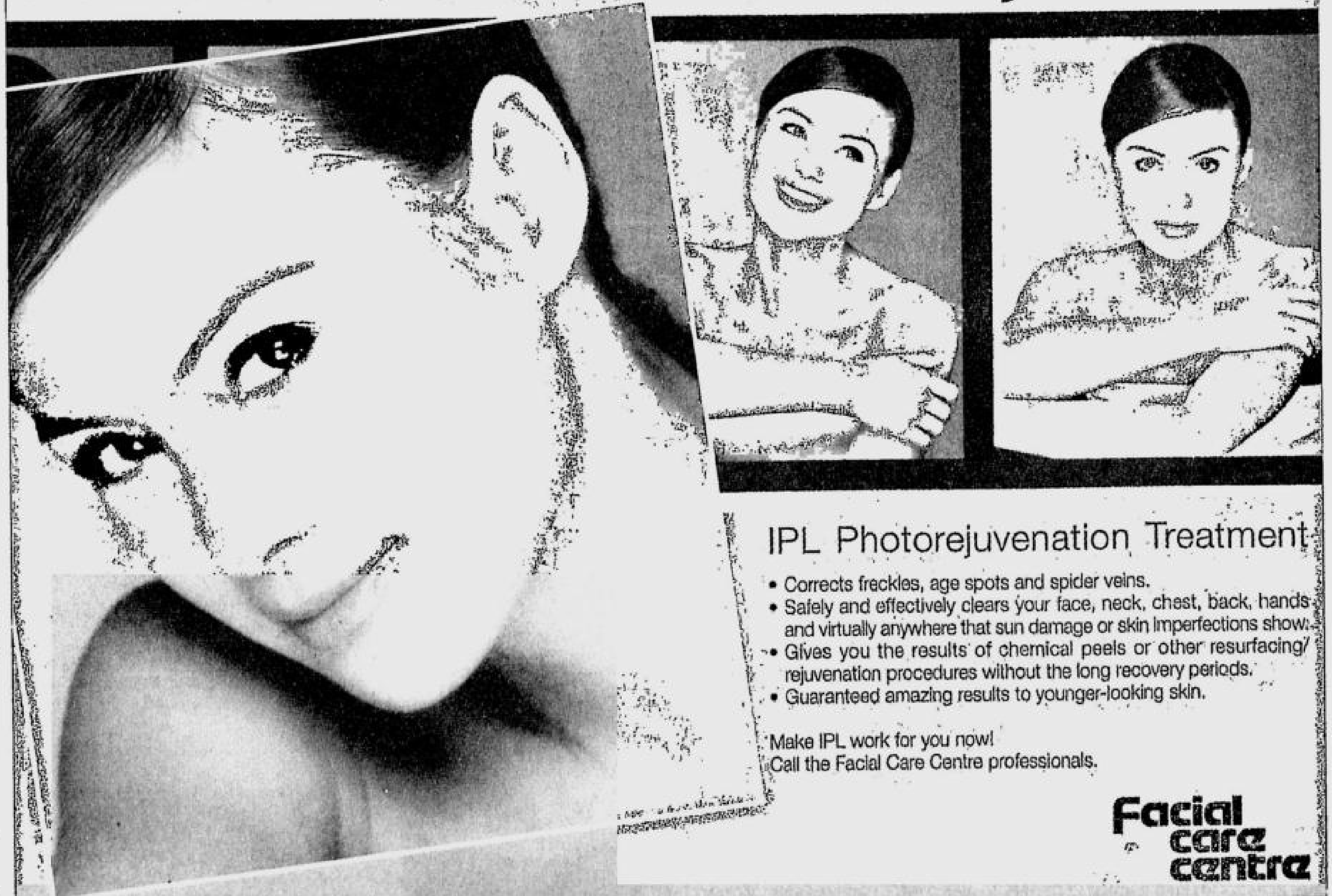

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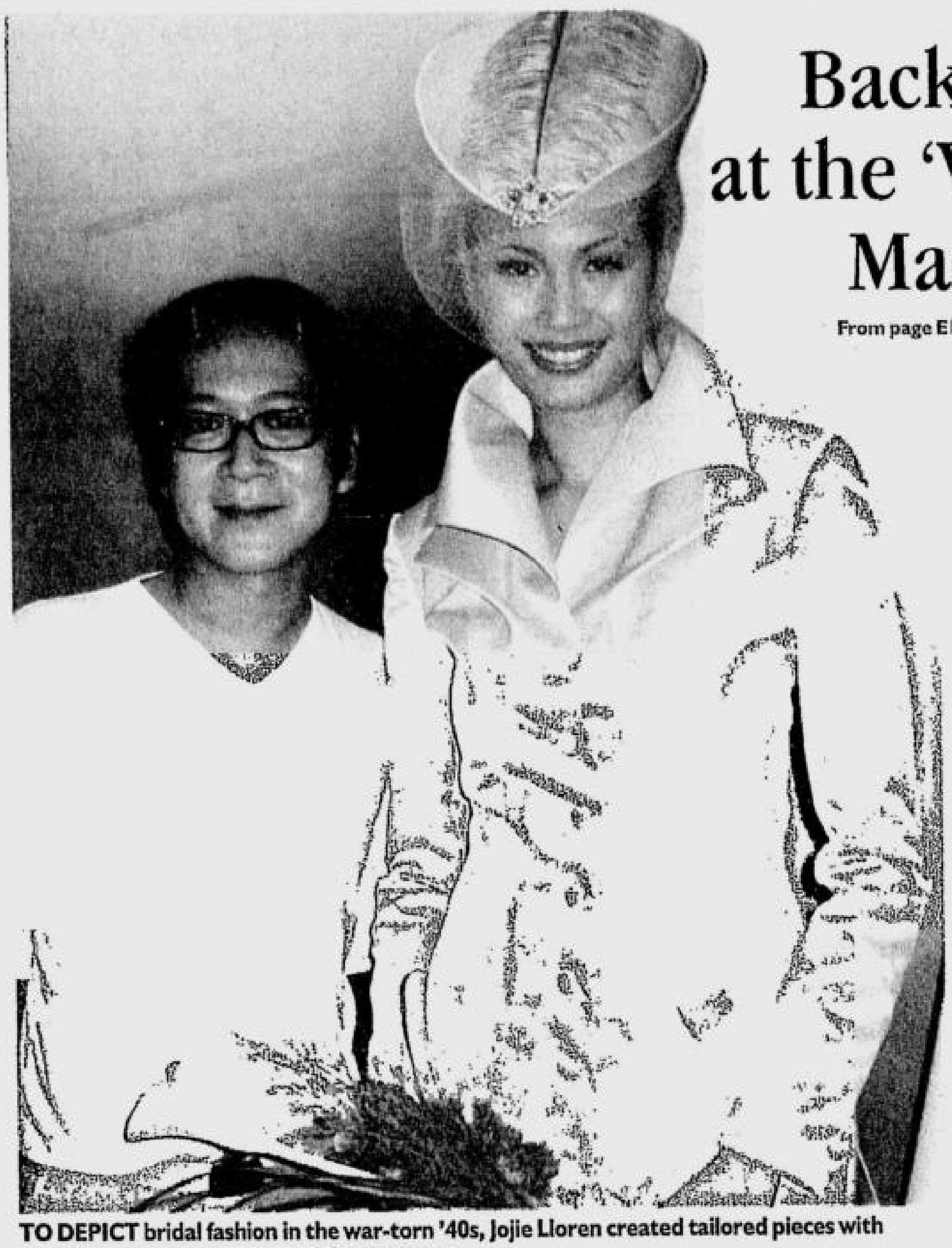
Backstage at the 'Wedding March'

From page E1



TO DEPICT bridal fashion in the war-torn '40s, Jojie Lloren created tailored pieces with shoulder pads as worn by model Ana Lloren.

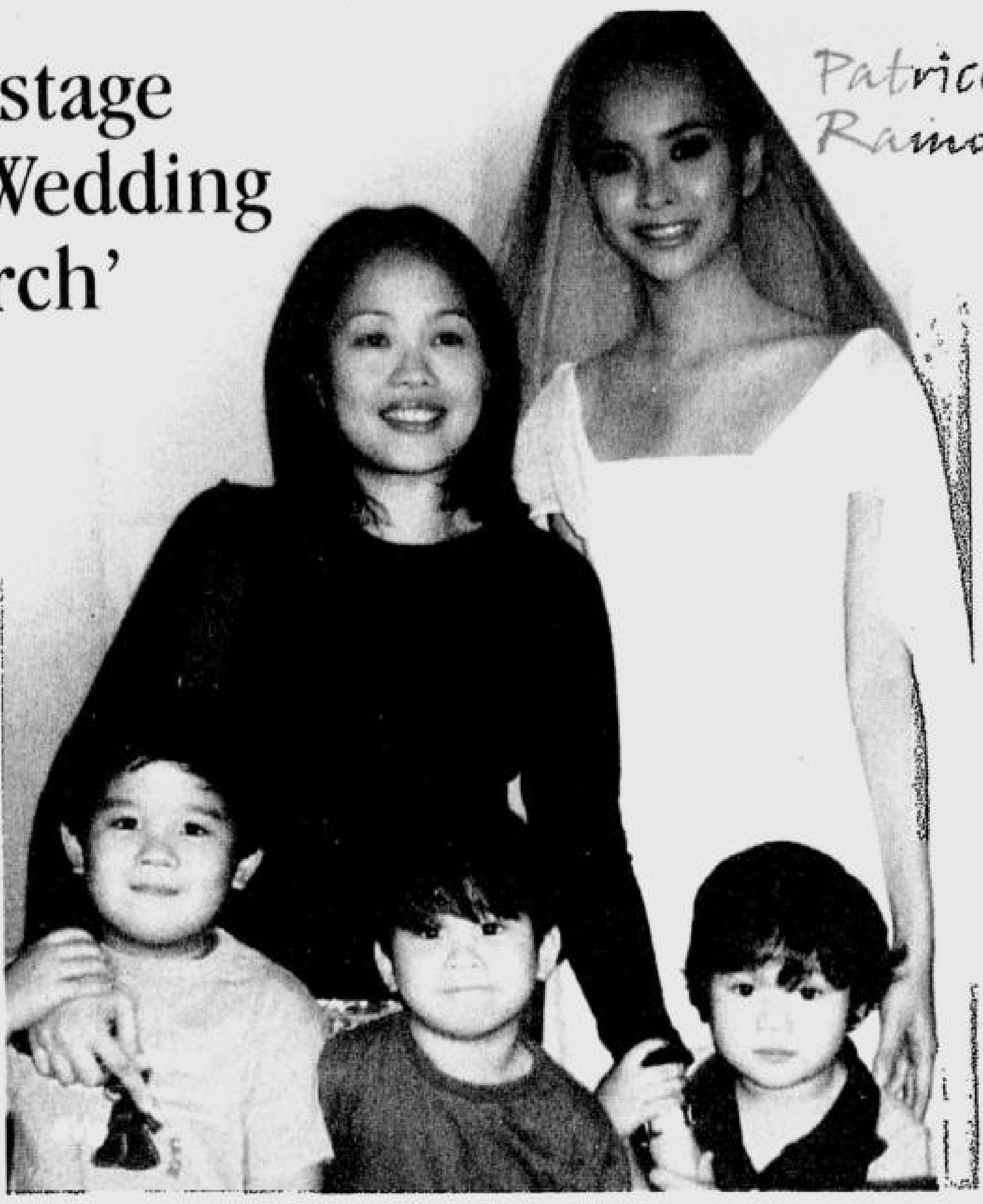
Jojie Lloren

Signature style: Architectural, more tailoring and focus on silhouette rather than embellishment.

Years in the business: 15

Celebrity clientele: Jamby Madrigal, Cricket Tantoco

Advice to brides-to-be: "Know what you want with regard to your gown and other details so you can tell your designer exactly how you want to look. Also, organize your budget."



Patrice Ramos-Diaz

Signature style: Feminine, soft, romantic

Years in the business: 8

Price range: Wedding gowns cost an average of P80,000, depending on design, fabric and details.

Advice to brides-to-be: "Once you've chosen your designer, trust him/her and allow a certain amount of freedom to explore more designs and possibilities."

PATRICE Ramos-Diaz creates yet another effortlessly feminine and fluid wedding gown that's just a tad reminiscent of the 1920's.

JC Buendia

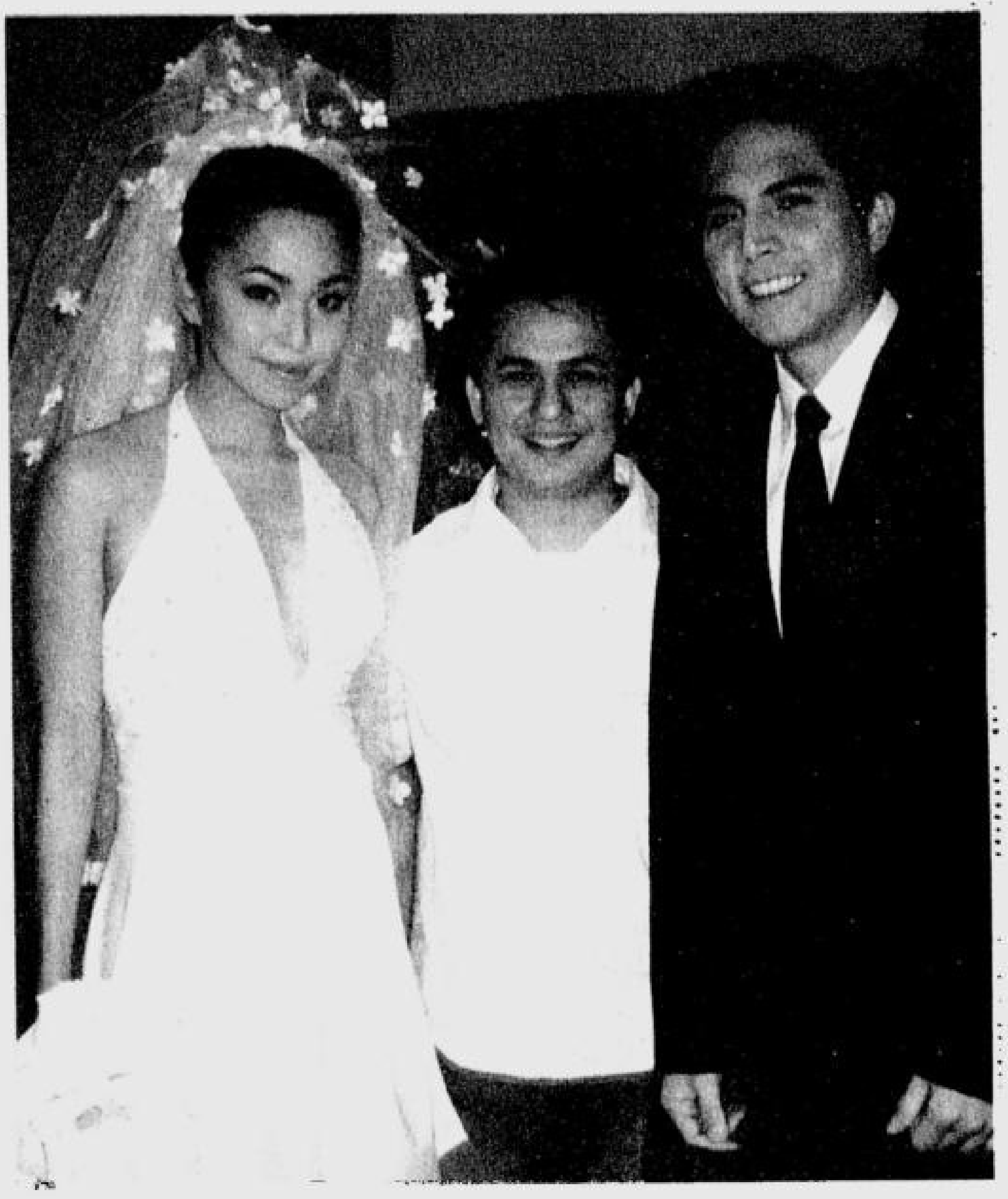
Signature style: Modern classic

Years in the business: 18

Celebrity clientele: President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Kris Aquino

Price range: Wedding gowns cost around P50,000 and above, depending on the fabric and embellishment.

Advice to brides-to-be: "When you've chosen your designer, trust him completely."



THE BRIDE'S bias cut, halter neck gown and the groom's sharp suit with peak lapels are Halston and 1970s-inspired but uniquely JC Buendia.

DESIGNER Frederick Peralta poses with Tim and one of his muses, G. Tongi, who is picture-perfect in a Jackie-O.-inspired Mikado silk wedding gown with detachable train.

Frederick Peralta

Signature style: Always sexy

Years in the business: 22

Celebrity clientele: Assunta de Rossi, Miriam Quiambao, G Tongi

Price range: Negotiable and depends on a number of things like fabrication, members of the entourage, etc. The designer prefers to work around a budget everyone is comfortable with and does "mental calculations and psyching of the event" so the gown is not over- or under-priced.

Advice to brides-to-be: "Designers are here to help execute and implement dreams so we cannot impose our designs. There are several things to consider when choosing your gown design. These are anatomy or figure, height, lifestyle and so on. Remember, in the process of trying to achieve your dream wedding, you will encounter a lot of different people. Don't get disillusioned or too excited. Simply rely on the experts and know what you want. Don't stress yourself. Once things are settled, let things take their proper course."

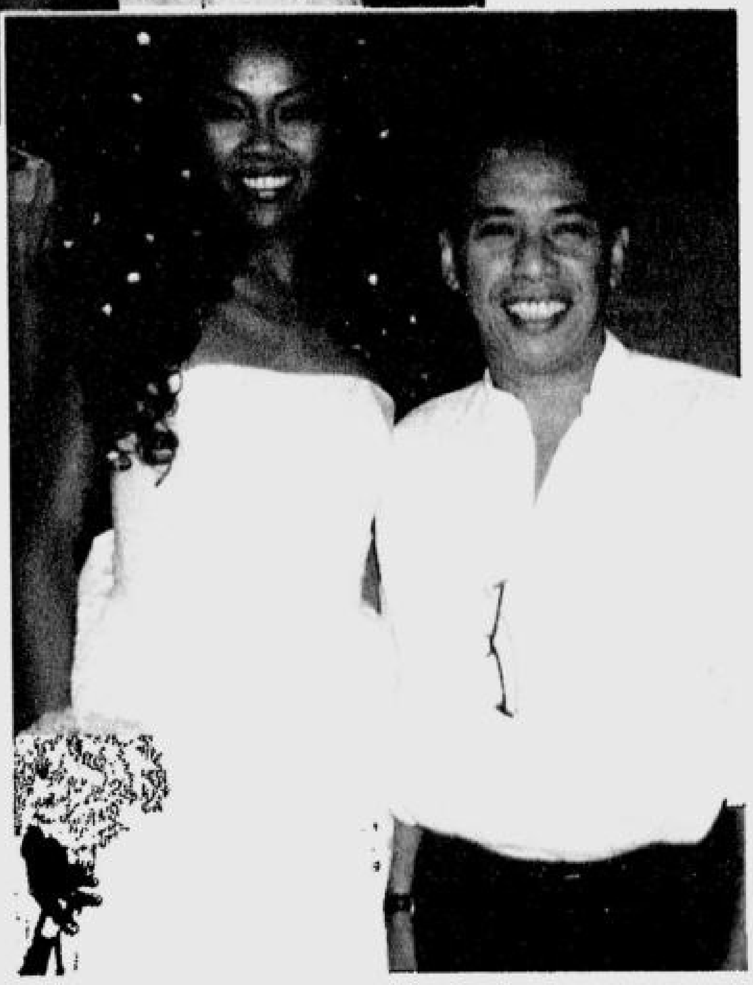
Loretto

Signature style: High glamour, beaded evening clothes

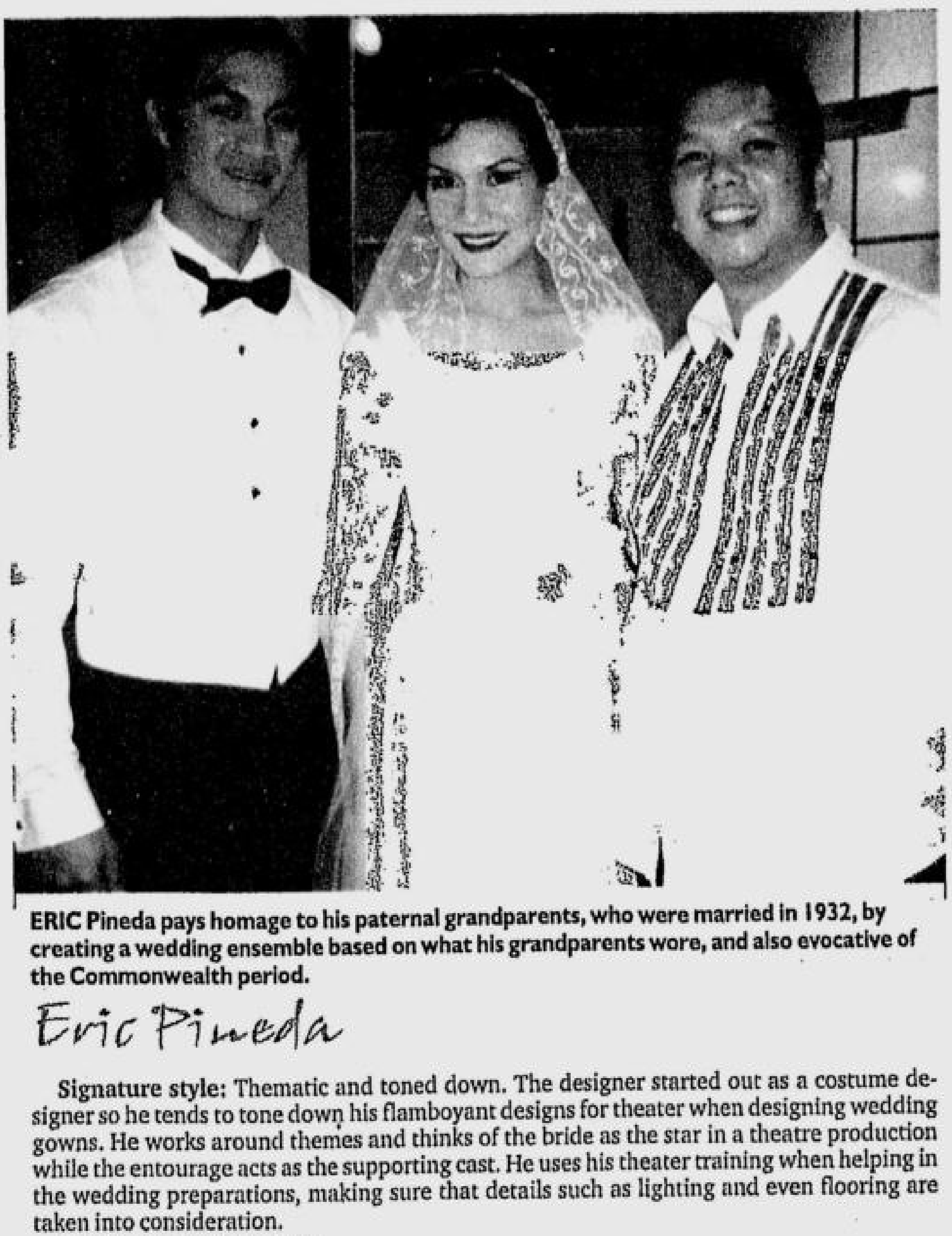
Years in the business: 25

Celebrity clientele: Imelda Marcos

Advice to brides-to-be: "Try to lose weight so you'll look your best on your wedding day."



'70S fashion never looked this good as Loretto creates a "hippie-ish," "earth momma"-like bridal gown using three tiers of gorgeous Belgian lace.



ERIC Pineda pays homage to his paternal grandparents, who were married in 1932, by creating a wedding ensemble based on what his grandparents wore, and also evocative of the Commonwealth period.

Eric Pineda

Signature style: Thematic and toned down. The designer started out as a costume designer so he tends to tone down his flamboyant designs for theater when designing wedding gowns. He works around themes and thinks of the bride as the star in a theatre production while the entourage acts as the supporting cast. He uses his theater training when helping in the wedding preparations, making sure that details such as lighting and even flooring are taken into consideration.

Years in the business: 17

Celebrity clientele: Sunshine Cruz, Jestoni and Lizette Alarcon, Janno Gibbs

Price range: The designer asks for the bride's budget and then designs accordingly.

Advice to brides-to-be: "Be realistic with your budget and expectations. A well-conceptualized wedding will prove to be cost-effective."

Lectures and demos on horticulture

A SERIES of lectures and demonstrations will be conducted during Horticulture 2005 Grand Exhibit today until Feb. 7 at Manila Seedling Bank Environment Center Greenhouses 2 and 3, Edsa corner Quezon Ave., QC. Student group tours with discounted entrance fees can be arranged. Call 4267581.

GOINGS ON

LECTURE. The Lopez Memorial Museum will hold a lecture on Art, Literacy and Children's Creativity on Jan. 29, 2-4 p.m., at the ground floor, Benpres Building, Exchange Road cor. Meralco Avenue, Pasig. Resource person is Prof. Maricar Gustilo-de Ocampo, faculty member of De La Salle University's Graduate School of Education. Call 6312417.

SHOW. The MTV Asia Aid benefit, featuring Alicia Keys, Jennifer Lopez, Sting, Nelly, 50 Cent, Ricky Martin, Green Day, Moby, Good Charlotte, Ronan Keating and top Asian artists, will premiere on MTV Philippines on Feb. 3, 10 p.m.

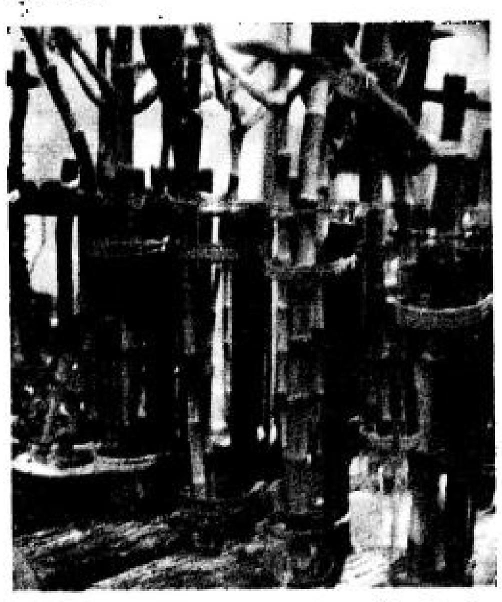
SEMINARS. CFS Continental Technology is offering the following seminars: Purchasing Management, Feb. 4, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Developing Excellent Business Communication Skills, Feb. 19, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Warehouse Management, Feb. 25, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Conducting Successful Negotiation, Feb. 24, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.. Call 8697960/ 8232358/ 8234825.

CONTEST. Join the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall's Search for Little Stars 2005. Interested parties must fill up an application form available at the Ad and Promo department starting Feb. 5 and attach a recent 2R close-up and 3R full-body photo with a photocopy of a birth certificate. Screening will be held March 5 while the grand finals is set on May 8. Call 6815401.

FAIR. "May Kasal sa Forbes Park, a Wedding Fair" will be held Feb. 5-6 at Santuario de San Antonio Parish Center, Forbes Park, Makati. Call 8250804/ 8253482.

CONGRESS. The Center for Learning and Teaching Styles Philippines hosts the First Cordillera Administrative Region Parents Congress 2005 on Feb. 19, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at Baguio City National High School Auditorium, Gov. Pack Road, Baguio City. Call (074) 4428877.

FAIR. The Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions will hold the National Trade Fair on March 9-13 at SM Megamall Megatrade Halls. Call 8312336/ 8312201/ 8323990.



ALL bottled up. Just one of the multitude of interesting sidelights on show in Martha's Handicraft of Tayabas, Quezon.

PROMOTE YOURSELF!

MARIA Silayan, liaison editor of Working Mom, during the recently held parenting workshop at Federal Design Expo. The topic was "Disciplining Your Children Based on Their Personality." The talk was led by Romulo Romero of OTI Consulting.

Torres High School reunion

MEMBERS of Torres High School class April 1949 will hold their annual reunion at 2 p.m., Feb. 5, at the Gardara Room of Club Filipino in Greenhills. For details, call Dr. Leticia de Mesa at 9287282.

WOVEN wonders. Letty Rosas of Leticia's Handicraft in Marinduque produces world-quality handwoven products for use in many imaginative ways, from tablerunners to placemats and curtains.

TURNING the lights on. Che and Dino Villaflores of IRA Bamboo Crafts are joining the National Trade Fair for the first time on March 9-13 at the SM Megamall Megatrade Halls. Foreign buyers, particularly from Europe and Japan, have shown preference for their products. The NTF is considered the most important domestic trade fair, a five-day annual event showcasing products from the 17 regions of the country.

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1 Winner of a Samsung Home Entertainment Package in the Grand Draw

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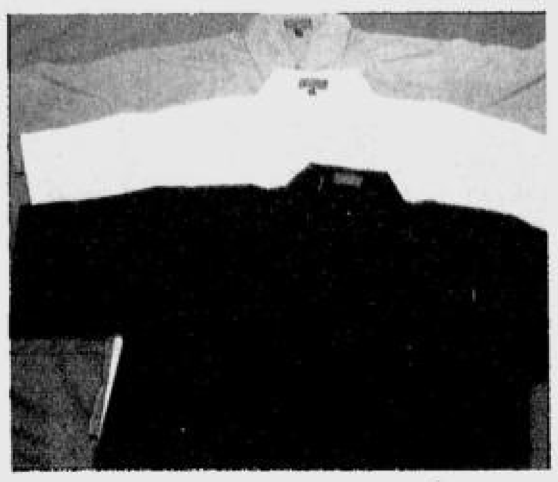

MEN'S polo shirts

COLORFUL ties

DENIM mini-skirt

Three-day grand sale

BIG discounts await shoppers as Araneta Center holds "Shoppin' & Jammin' Insomnia," a three-day center-wide sale featuring live entertainment, extended shopping hours, a seafood festival and up to 50-percent off on great items.

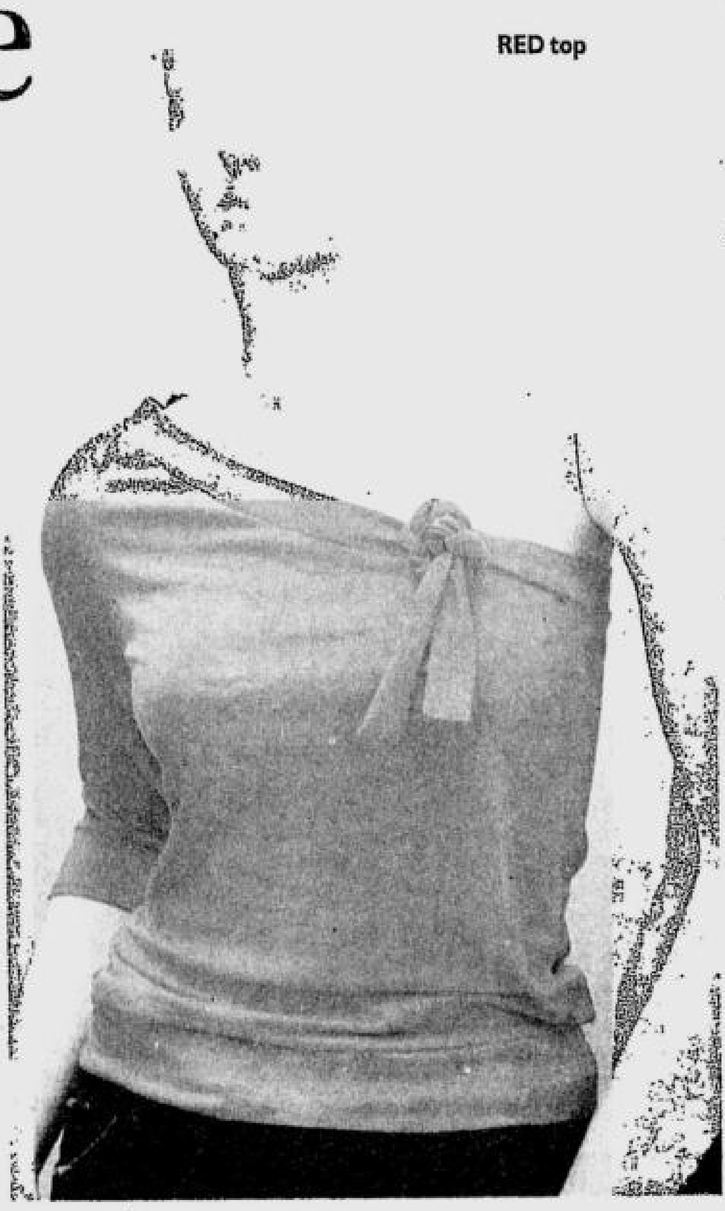
Visit your favorite shops at Gateway Mall, Farmers Plaza, Ali Mall, Value Station, Shopwise and SM Department Store and enjoy valuable savings when you shop for ladies and men's apparel, fashion accessories, shoes, toiletries and more.

At Farmer's Plaza, the shopping gets even more exciting with a sidewalk sale that offers great finds at substantially reduced prices.

You can also enjoy cool entertainment with a series of free jazz performances at Coliseum Circle-and live band performances at the Ali Mall Times Square Arcade.

There's an all-star Klownz comedy show featuring Allan K, Ai-ai delas Alas, John Lapuz, the Sexbomb Dancers and many more, as well as a Seafood Festival at the Coliseum Parking area near the Araneta Coliseum Red Gate.

To give shoppers more time for bargain hunting, mall hours have been extended from 10 a.m. to 12 midnight until tomorrow and from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Jan. 30.


RED top

天
風
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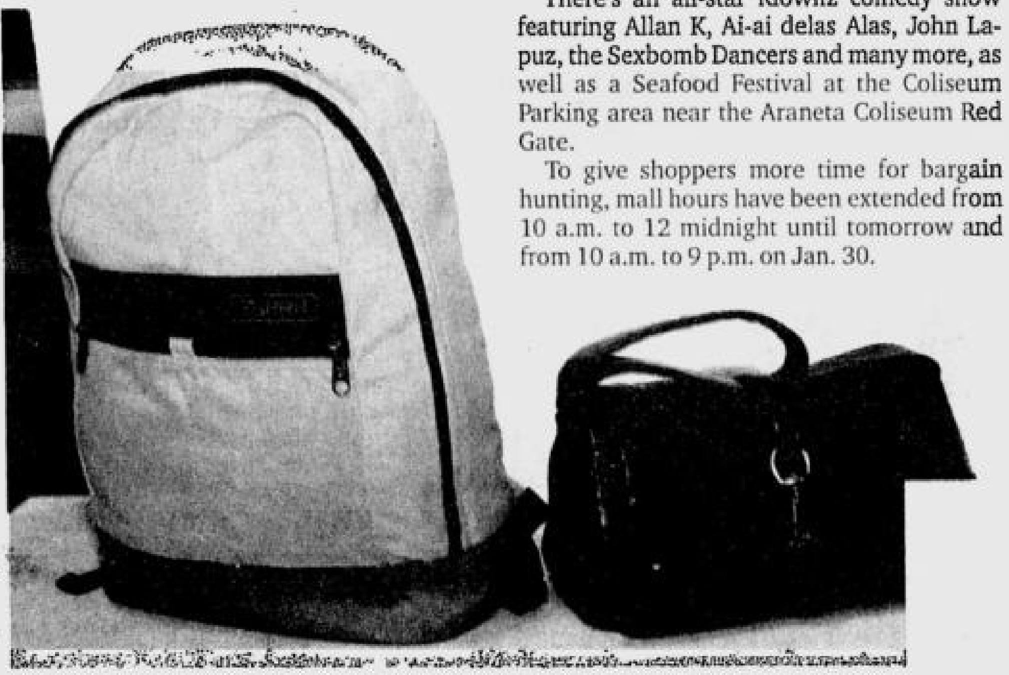
Bitztab
SPORTS shirt

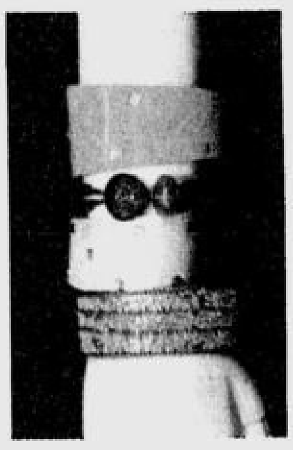
DOUBLE-STRAP body bags

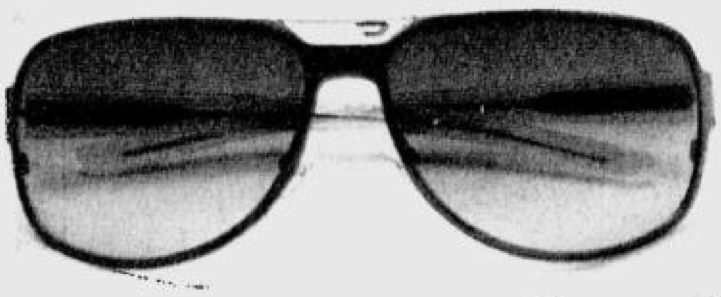
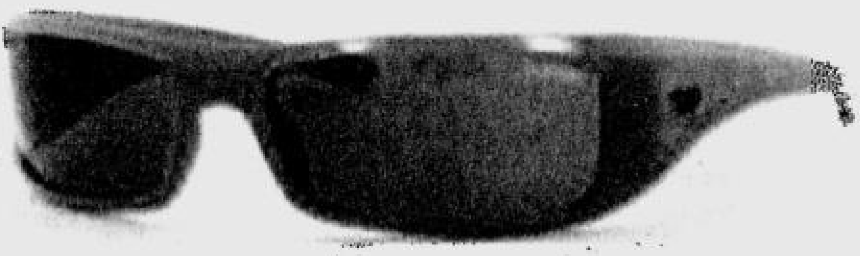
FRAGRANCES


BACKPACK and ladies' bag

BOYS' and men's shoes

LADIES' sandals


JEANS (left) and assorted bangles (above)

Daring, dashing eyewear

BREAKING away from bland and typical trends in eyewear, the new Diesel eyewear collection presents modern and innovative designs that make use of hip, funky color choices and designs.

The collection offers wraparound models in acetate in various rectangular, square or cat's-eye shapes, characterized by massive temples and fronts.

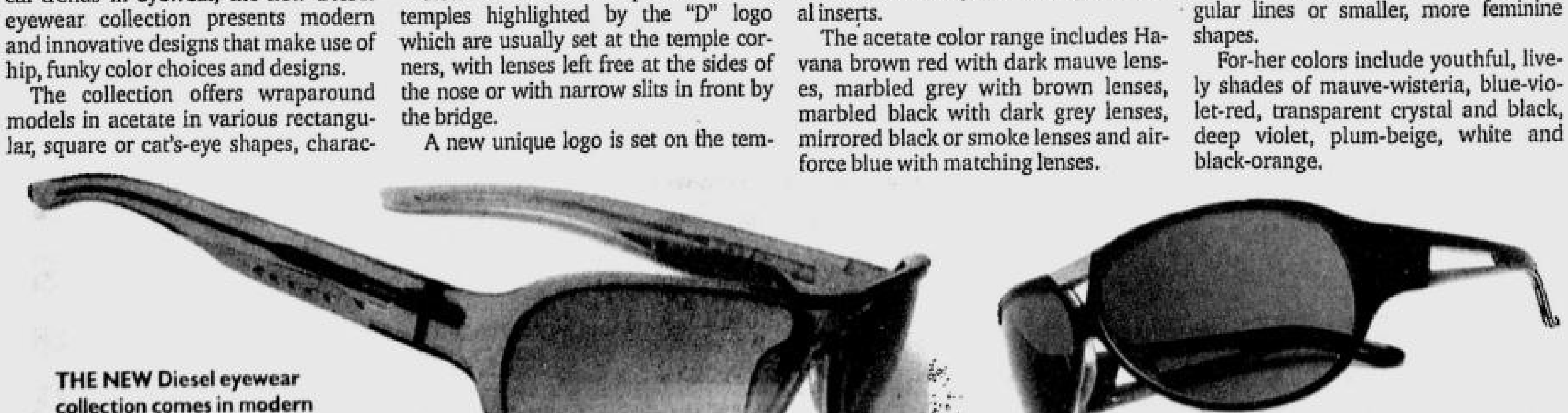
New details include pierced forked temples highlighted by the "D" logo which are usually set at the temple corners, with lenses left free at the sides of the nose or with narrow slits in front by the bridge.

A new unique logo is set on the temples and takes the shape of a stylized metal "D" embraced by two rectangular metal inserts.

The acetate color range includes Havana brown red with dark mauve lenses, marbled grey with brown lenses, marbled black with dark grey lenses, mirrored black or smoke lenses and airforce blue with matching lenses.

The optical collection has several acetate frames in masculine, boxy rectangular lines or smaller, more feminine shapes.

For-her colors include youthful, lively shades of mauve-wisteria, blue-violet-red, transparent crystal and black, deep violet, plum-beige, white and black-orange.


THE NEW Diesel eyewear collection comes in modern designs and funky colors.

World-class shopping in Cubao

RUSTAN'S opens its eighth store at the Gateway Mall in Araneta Center, its newest home only several blocks away from its previous location in the Cubao Area.

As the anchor department store of Gateway Mall, Rustan's will occupy three floors of premium space, offering exclusive world-class brands and homegrown private labels. Level 1 on the Cosmetics and Toiletries division carries an extensive collection of international make-up, perfume and toiletries brands. The floor features Rustan's trademark sleek interiors, personalized services and trained sales professionals.

Luxe brand Montblanc is also housed in this floor with its array of writing instruments, timepieces and leather goods.

When completed, Rustan's at Gateway will house everything one would expect from the country's premier lifestyle retail hub. The Gashion area will brings together the world's best brands and Rustan's highly successful private labels, while the Home section will showcase exquisite furniture and décor pieces.

Rustan's other branches are in Makati, Alabang Town Center, Shangri-La Plaza, Robinson's Place Manila, Harrison Plaza and Cebu.

ROAD TALK

MARKET SATURATED

China
Auto Sales
growth slowing
down

BEIJING-Chinese vehicle sales are likely to keep on slowing down this year and the stellar growth seen early this decade will probably never return, state media said Sunday, citing a leading industry analyst.

Total vehicle sales are likely to rise by about 12 percent this year to 5.8 million, Xinhua news agency reported, quoting Xu Changming of the government think-tank the State Information Center.

The "blow-out growth" of 2002 and 2003, when waves of newly affluent Chinese acquired their first car, will not come again, Xu said.

Twelve percent growth would be welcome news in most countries' auto markets, but in China, it is down from 15.5 percent in 2004 and 34.2 percent in 2003, according to previously released data.

Passenger car sales are expected to fare slightly better, with an increase of 17 percent this year compared with 15.2 percent in 2004.

But that, too, is a weak echo of roaring expansion rates seen in 2003, when passenger car sales sped ahead with growth of 75.3 percent.

Slowing growth reflects a gradually saturated market especially in the cities, where more and more middle-class families have now achieved their dream of owning a car.

It also reflects government efforts to slow down overheated industries including the car sector, with the introduction last year of stricter rules on auto loans.

The slowdown comes as unwelcome news for local and foreign automakers, with earlier reports indicating bulging inventories have already reached more than half a million cars.

The threat of lackluster sales has forced some companies to start cutting prices.

Luxury carmaker Bayerische Motoren Werke AG (BMW) saw China sales fall 16 percent in 2004 from 2003 and has reportedly slashed the price of five domestically made sedans by up to 100,000 yuan ($12,000) per vehicle.

The trend for lower prices is reinforced by China's drive to cut tariff barriers to implement promises made in order to enter the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In less than 18 months, Chinese auto tariffs will have fallen to 25 percent, compared with up to 100 percent when China became a WTO member in December 2001.

Cutting prices may make sense for individual carmakers but for the industry as a whole, it could worsen the problems, since some families may postpone buying a car in hopes of a better deal later on.

Many of the world's top brands seem unfazed by the slowdown.

Japan's largest automaker Toyota Motor Corp plans to raise the number of dealers in China to 1,000 by 2010, a more than sevenfold jump from 140 dealers at the end of 2003, the Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper reported last week.

While the world's big automakers all want to enter China, the country's own auto manufacturers want out.

Fearing there will not be enough demand for rapidly increasing production capacity, several local makers are looking to export markets, eyeing China's immediate neighbors first.

The China Machinery Industry Federation is scheduled this month to hold auto exhibitions in Vietnam and Cambodia, focusing on Chinese-manufactured buses.

Others have much more ambitious targets. China's Chery Automobile recently reached a deal to sell its cars in the United States. *AFP*

> Twelve percent growth would be welcome news in most countries' auto markets, but in China, it is down from 15.5 percent in 2004 and 34.2 percent in 2003, according to previously released data

Isuzu conquers rough roads, sales charts in 2004

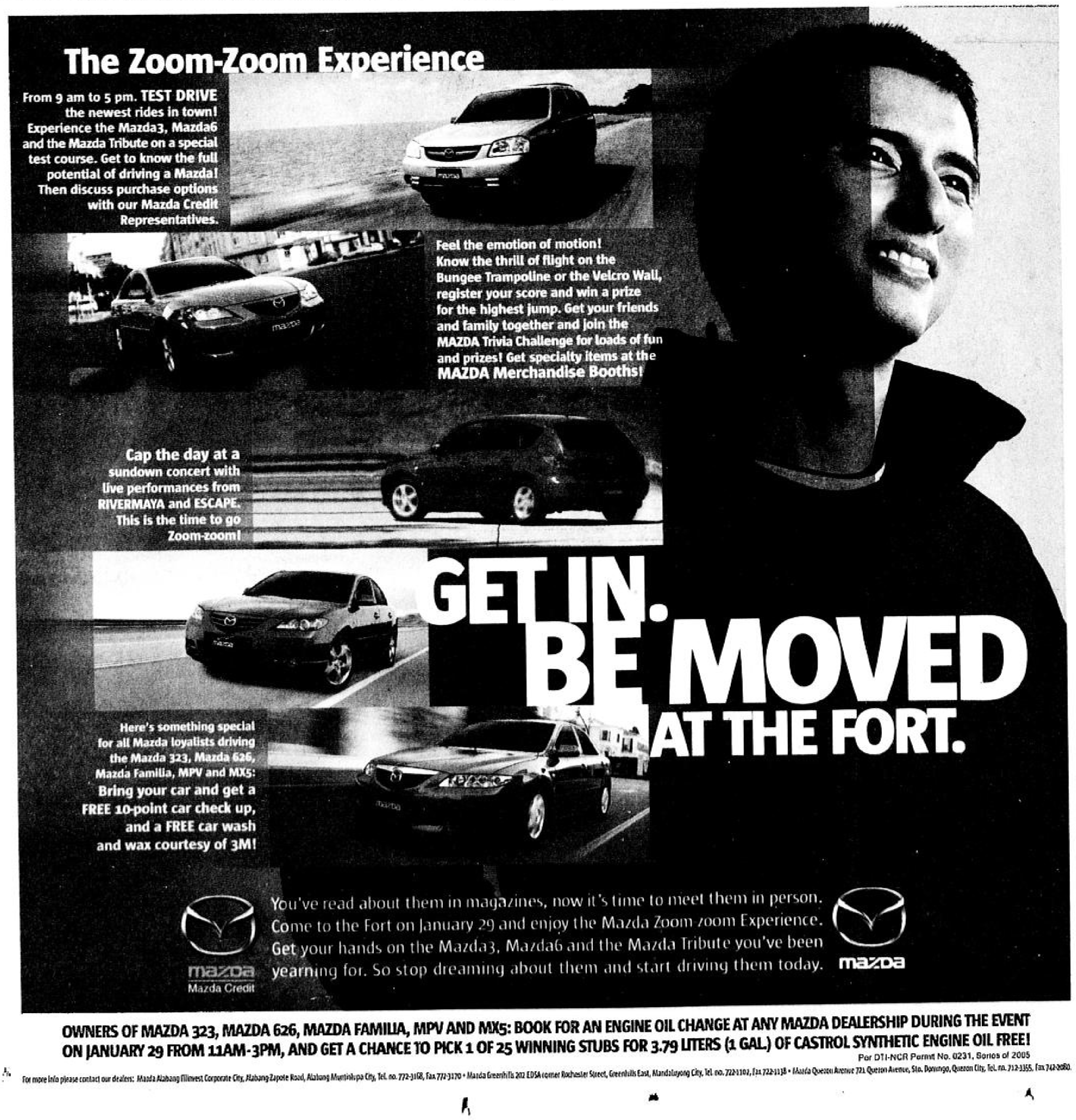
WHILE the rest of the Philippine auto industry was busy launching passenger cars left and right last year, Isuzu Philippines Corp, assembler of the best diesel-powered utility vehicles, concentrated on improving its commercial-vehicle lineup. Along the way, the company promoted local tourism, spread the good news about diesel and topped pickup and truck sales.

Isuzu's hectic schedule of events and activities in 2004 commenced as early as February, when it took the motoring press to Palawan aboard the stylish and reliable Crosswind and then to Mt. Pinatubo in the hard-working and handsome D-Max. As it had done in previous years, Isuzu wisely tied up its marketing efforts to Philippine tourism. Many of its customers, after all, either live in far-flung places away from Metro Manila or dwell in the metropolis but like going out of town to escape from the daily grind of city life. Thus, the market continued seeing Isuzu vehicles as competent movers that are more than able to take their owners wherever they want or need to go.

In March, the diesel authority treated its valued customers to the last but successful staging of the "Isuzu Challenge," a fun-filled fuel-economy contest complemented by family-oriented side activities. The significance of the event was twofold: promoting the benefits of fuel-efficient diesel engines and allowing Isuzu to intimately interact with its customers.

In April, long-time company president Toru

ISUZU/ F2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Isuzu conquers rough roads, sales charts in 2004

From page F1

Koyasu turned over the reins of IPC leadership to Yoshifumi Komura. Much younger than his predecessor, Komura immediately injected dynamism into the company, as seen in ensuing marketing strategies that were both aggressive and refreshing. The first of these was Isuzu's "Diesel Up" campaign, where the company conducted a search for the Isuzu vehicles with the highest mileage figures.

Isuzu next challenged the media to an extremely grueling activity. In June, determined members of the motoring press drove several D-Max units to the farthest accessible point of Mt. Pulag - the highest mountain in Luzon and second highest in all of the Philippines - from which the participants hiked all the way to the summit. Everyone came down convinced about the D-Max's go-anywhere capabilities.

July marked a momentous chapter in the annals of IPC, as the company celebrated its 7th anniversary. For this special period, Isuzu staged a historic but difficult event called the "Isuzu Cloverleaf Endurance Drive." Four Isuzu vehicles (Trooper, Crosswind, D-Max 4x4 and D-Max 4x2) took off from a single starting point in Manila, went four separate ways (Sagada, Tuguegarao, Mindoro and Bicol) and came back to a common meeting point at the Fort in Taguig - in the process accumulating more than 4,000 km. This was probably the most intricately planned and grandest driving activity ever staged by a vehicle assembler in the country.

Two weeks after the triumphant return of the Isuzu vehicles from four scenic destinations, IPC benevolently donated two classrooms to a school in Biñan, Laguna. The altruistic deed proved that Isuzu was not only a responsible transportation partner, but a good corporate citizen within its immediate community as well.

In August, Isuzu staged a huge exhibit of commercial vehicles at the World Trade Center in Manila. Dubbed "Truck Attack," the expo showed the best products by Isuzu, including new locally assembled buses. The exhibit showed to the public just why exactly Isuzu had been the most trusted name when it came to diesel-powered workhorses.

Isuzu might not have launched an entirely new vehicle in 2004, but it did introduce improved and modified models of its products for 2005. The Trooper was given a tasteful exterior makeover in September; the Crosswind in October was given a new high-end variant called the Sportivo; and the best-selling D-Max was likewise refurbished in December. Isuzu saw no need to bring in all-new vehicles as all its models were still selling briskly. And by improving these models, Isuzu is set to continue dominating the commercial-vehicle segment in 2005.

Last year, Isuzu was also active in sports, hosting a bowling tournament for dealers in April and the "Save Fuel, Save Par" Media Golf Cup in November. By being involved in sports, IPC was able to subtly preach the importance of excellence in being successful. Indeed, the overall excellence of Isuzu's vehicles and the service provided to customers played a key role in the company's many successes in 2004.

One of the most crucial of these successes, of course, was the overwhelming emergence of the D-Max as the undisputed No. 1 pickup in the country, helping Isuzu garner more than 44 percent (2,712 units) of the total pickup market. Its nearest rival could only manage a 24-percent market share. Isuzu's 2004 pickup sales represented a huge growth compared to 2003 figures (1,419 units; 21 percent).

Isuzu's N-Series light truck was even more dominant, cornering nearly 60 percent (683 units) of the market.

The Crosswind, too, was strong, seizing more than 28 percent (5,609 units) of the AUV market, in effect becoming the best-selling diesel vehicle in its class. On top of that, the Crosswind led the entry-level SUV segment in JD Power Asia Pacific's 2004 Philippine Initial Quality Study. The study gauges vehicle quality during the first two to six months of ownership based on evaluations from more than 1,200 new-vehicle owners. It focuses on 135 problem areas affecting quality across nine IQS categories. The overall model performance is summarized as the number of problems reported per 100 vehicles (PP100). The Crosswind ranked highest in its class with a PP100 of 121, leading the entry-level SUV segment in five of the nine problem categories.

Clearly, Isuzu tops the list among commercial-vehicle buyers. In 2004, the company once again proved-as it had in the past-that its vehicles can go anywhere, anytime. For 2005, expect Isuzu to scale even greater heights as it continues providing everyone's transport needs.

Own a Nissan Frontier or Patrol, get chance to win P1M

UNIVERSAL Motors Corp (UMC), the authorized assembler and distributor of Nissan light commercial vehicles and recreational vehicles, jumpstarts 2005 with great news for its customers. In line with its 50th anniversary, UMC launches the "Buy 1 Take 1 Million" promo that brings new Nissan owners closer to P1 million upon purchasing any Frontier or Patrol model from Jan. 17 to April 15.

A corresponding number of raffle coupons will be given to buyers of Frontier pickups and Patrol where the higher the cost of the unit bought, the more raffle coupons will be received. One can even triple the chances of winning by buying from Jan. 17 to Feb. 17.

As if the chance of winning P1 million is not enough, UMC gives more awesome deals to buyers of the Frontier and Patrol such as discounts of up to P100,000 on cash purchases, more flexible financing schemes such as zero percent interest, low downpayment of 10 percent, or longer payment terms at six years. Truly, owning a power vehicle such as the Frontier and the Patrol has never been this easy!

The Nissan Frontier has gained its reputation for its dependability and superior off-road driving performance, making itself the number one pickup for four years in a row. Frontier is available in 4x2 and 4x4 variants and in manual and automatic transmission. Esteemed in the automotive industry as the sport utility vehicle (SUV) for the privileged few, the Patrol has become an icon of nobility, complementing the lifestyle of the elite. Boasting of supreme engine power, a choice between the ZD30 Neo DI Turbo Diesel Engine in automatic and manual transmissions and the 4.5L TB45E Gasoline Engine in automatic transmission, the Patrol matches its luxurious looks with optimum performance. The Frontier and Patrol are distributed by UMC, the only 100-percent Filipino-owned automotive assembler and distributor in the Philippines today.

> As if the chance of winning P1 million is not enough, UMC gives more awesome deals to buyers of the Frontier and Patrol such as discounts of up to P100,000 on cash purchases, more flexible financing schemes such as zero percent interest, low downpayment of 10 percent, or longer payment terms at six years

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1 million
P1,000,000
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Hurry!
Triple your chances
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Forging an alliance

A GROUP of Filipino businessmen and aftermarket tuners led by Sophie de los Santos of Tradeshow International and Sammy Liuson of Wheel Gallery recently concluded an observation and technology enhancement tour of the 2005 Tokyo Auto Salon, the biggest aftermarket show in the World. The Filipino contingent were visitors of Minoru Goko of the Nihon Automotive Technical School (NATS), one of the prime movers of Japanese tuning and the Godfather of Japanese customization.

Shown during the informal press conference discussing the improvement of Filipino car shows are (from left) Ellen Madrilejos and Sophie de los Santos of Tradeshow International; Minoru Goko of NATS; Richard Saberton, Sema director Asia-Pacific region, Sammy Liuson of Wheel Gallery and Victor "Atoy" Llave of Atoy Paint and Bodykits. "The Tokyo Auto Salon tour is a great opportunity to further develop the cause of the local aftermarket industry. Our brief stay in Japan provided us with an oversight on how to enhance the products and services that we in the aftermarket industry provide," states Liuson.

Jaguar S-Type Diesel voted best executive saloon

THE JAGUAR S-Type Diesel has picked up the award for the "Best Executive Saloon 2005" at the Top Gear Magazine awards held at the Groucho Club late last year.

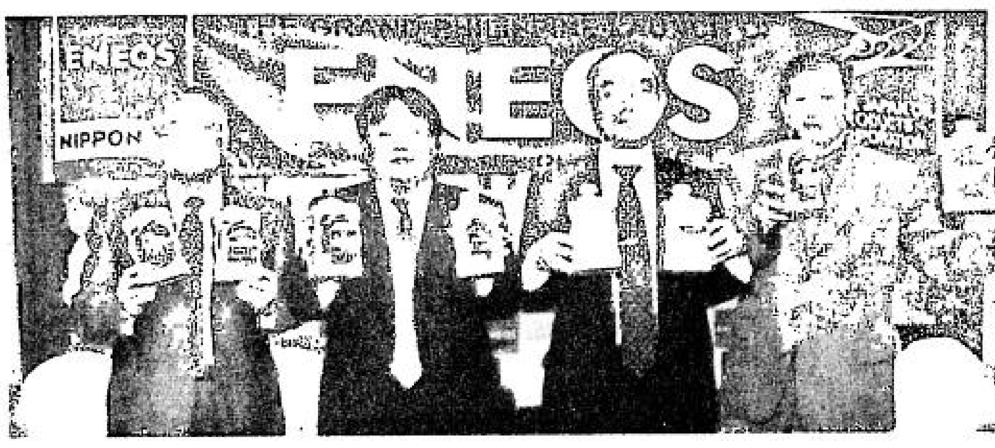
A panel of judges from the Top Gear Magazine and TV program voted the S-Type Diesel, which went on sale in April 2004, as the best entry in the class because of its class-leading handling, smooth ride and quietness.

Jeremy Clarkson, host of BBC2's "Top Gear" and columnist for Top Gear Magazine said: "It's the best handling and smoothest riding executive saloon of them all. In an era of spine-breaking Audis and BMWs, Jaguar hasn't forgotten that execs need cosseting at the end of a hard day. For our brave and fearless businessmen up and down the land, the S-Type Diesel really is the best."

Phil Popham, UK managing director, Jaguar Cars, added: "We are delighted with yet another award for the S-Type Diesel, this is another fantastic example of the recognition that the S-Type has received from both the media and our customers. The introduction of the Diesel engine has made it an even more attractive proposition and this award is further evidence that the S-Type Diesel continues to compete with the best in class."

The S-Type Diesel has scooped a number of awards since its launch, including most recently the Diesel Car of the Year at the Scottish Car of the Year Awards. The X-Type Diesel also picked up the award for best Executive Car at the Northern Ireland Maxol Car of the Year Awards 2004.

For inquiries about the S-Type Diesel, visit the Jaguar showrooms at Enzo Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati and at the ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center.



NEW PLAYER IN LUBRICANTS MARKET
Nippon Oil Corp, Japan's largest oil and energy company, marks its entry into the Philippine market with the introduction recently of Eneos, a full line of engine lubricants. Eneos engine lubricants are formulated in Japan using the most advanced lubricant technologies and specifically designed for Japanese manufactured cars and industrial machinery. Shown, from left, are Nippon Oil executive Wen-Ping Chiu, senior marketing staff Kentaro Sodeyama, Nippon Oil Corp president Shinichiro Fukuda and Delta Japan Oil Products Corp president Arturo Tayag. Delta Japan Oil Products Corp is the exclusive distributor of Eneos in the Philippines.

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Starex Is The No. 1 Van In The Philippines Today

The Starex has catapulted Hyundai to the top of the Filipino family van market, with a chart-topping 1,919 units sold in 2004. Strong sales were further fuelled by the launching of a 2.5-liter CRDi (common rail direct injection) variant that produces 145 ps and can reach up to 180 kilometers per hour at top speed.

Starex now holds 28.4% market share, followed by Toyota's Hi-Ace and Previa with 26.2%. Nissan's Urvan is third with 18.6% share.

Aside from its bestselling Starex vans, the Hyundai model line-up includes the Hyundai Matrix, which also enjoyed good market acceptance last year; the sporty Hyundai Coupe; the executive-class Hyundai Sonata; and the luxurious Hyundai XG.

The Starex and other quality Hyundai products are available at HARI's 19 Hyundai Dealerships (three will be added this year). All Hyundai vehicles bought from any of HARI's official dealers come with a 3-year/100,000km bumper to bumper factory warranty. This warranty is an assurance of superior quality backed up by the availability of genuine Hyundai Mobis parts, special diagnostic and service tools, technological support and first-class service from Hyundai-trained personnel.

On the global scene, Hyundai's cumulative exports passed the 10 million unit milestone in 2004 while annual sales edged past the two million mark for the first time ever. Hyundai made its presence felt at the 2004 China International Automobile Exhibition as it doubled its sales in China over the previous year. In Japan, Hyundai was awarded 2004 Good Design Award by the Japanese Industrial Design Promotion Organization. The Tucson was awarded the highest honor bestowed by the association on an imported SUV section in recognition of its elegant, creative and practical design. In the United States, the quality of Hyundai cars received a resounding endorsement in the J.D. Power and Associates 2004 Initial Quality Survey as the Sonata scored best in its class while in overall scoring, Hyundai trailed the industry leader by just one point. Hyundai is set to start production in its latest production plant in Alabama and intends to make the said plant one of the world's top-rated factories in terms of quality and productivity.

Hyundai has also invested significantly in the development of future oriented, environment–friendly automobiles and is currently preparing for the mass production of Hybrid cars. On the sports scene, Hyundai recognizes soccer football as the only truly global game and has been in its capacity as official partner of the FIFA and UEFA.

And at the close of the year, the editors of Businessweek, the world's largest circulation business weekly, picked HMC Chairman Chung Mong-Koo as among the best managers of the year citing him for his outstanding accomplishments in boosting quality and sales volume. Hyundai is the world's 8th biggest carmaker and aims to be among the top 5 by 2010.

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*Based on CAMPI 2004 reports, Van Category

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0319, Series of 2005.

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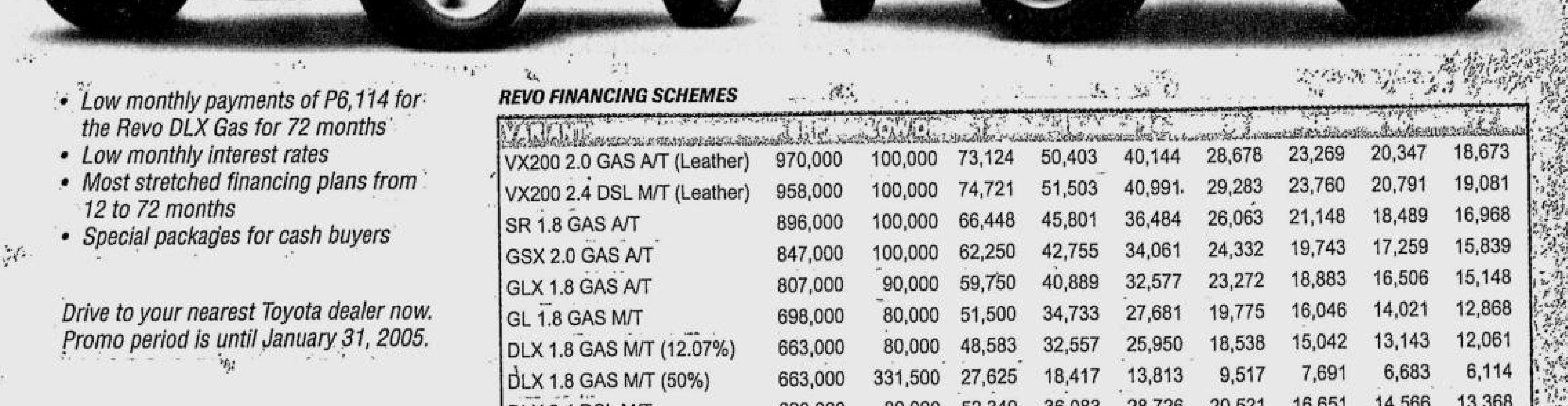

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VX200 2.0 GAS A/T (Leather)	970,000	100,000	73,124	50,403	40,144	28,678	23,269	20,347	18,673
VX200 2.4 DSL M/T (Leather)	958,000	100,000	74,721	51,503	40,991	29,283	23,760	20,791	19,081
SR 1.8 GAS A/T	896,000	100,000	66,448	45,801	36,484	26,063	21,148	18,489	16,968
GSX 2.0 GAS A/T	847,000	100,000	62,250	42,755	34,061	24,332	19,743	17,259	15,839
GLX 1.8 GAS A/T	807,000	90,000	59,750	40,889	32,577	23,272	18,883	16,506	15,148
GL 1.8 GAS M/T	698,000	80,000	51,500	34,733	27,681	19,775	16,046	14,021	12,868
DLX 1.8 GAS M/T (12.07%)	663,000	80,000	48,583	32,557	25,950	18,538	15,042	13,143	12,061
DLX 1.8 GAS M/T (50%)	663,000	331,500	27,625	18,417	13,813	9,517	7,691	6,683	6,114
DLX 2.4 DSL M/T	690,000	80,000	52,349	36,083	28,726	20,521	16,651	14,566	13,368

RAV4 FINANCING SCHEMES

VARIANT	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
4x4 A/T	1,268,000	100,000	103,579	71,395	56,801	40,577	32,925	28,821	26,450
4x2 SV M/T	1,048,000	100,000	83,733	57,715	45,921	32,805	26,618	23,299	21,382

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0097 Series of 2005.

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2005
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PATTI'S IN TOWN
Internationally acclaimed singer Patti Austin has arrived in Manila for her concert with the Philippines' own concert king, Martin Nievera, at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel tonight and at the Araneta Coliseum tomorrow night. She was met at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport by executive vice president Jeffrey Cal of Maximedia, which is producing the concert. Tickets to the Cebu concert are available at SM Cebu, (032) 231-2423 or 2310627; Dunkin Donuts, (032) 346-7256; National Bookstore, (032) 255-4644; Cebu Waterfront lobby ticket counter; and all Rose Pharmacy Branches. Tickets to the Manila concert are available at all SM Ticketnet outlets, 911-55555; Maximedia, 551-7777.

Every inch a Supreme

By Bayani San Diego
Contributor

KAAREN RAGLAND, leader of The Sounds of the Supremes

KAAREN RAGLAND, leader of the group called The Sounds of the Supremes, is every inch a ... Supreme.

Could it be because she once worked with original Supreme Mary Wilson and legendary jazz pianist Phil Moore?

"Phil is one of the few black pianists who played for MGM (Studios)," Kaaren says proudly. "He arranged music for the likes of Lena Horne, Diahann Carroll and Marilyn Monroe."

Moore also collaborated with The Supremes for the group's Las Vegas shows in the 1970s. "He gave my name when the group announced an opening," Kaaren recalls. "At about that time, he was also arranging for my nightclub act in Los Angeles."

She breezed through the auditions and became a member of the new Supremes. She thus shared the stage with Wilson herself.

"It was a lot of fun working with Mary," Kaaren recounts. "We were together for eight and a half years. Since I was very young when I started with them, she was very encouraging and supportive."

Kaaren rues missing out on warbling with Diana Ross—the ultimate Supreme, she says, the true diva. "She left the group in 1970, and I joined in 1977. I would love to meet her, just to thank her for being who she is, and to tell her how much I appreciate what she has done. She paved the way for young, gifted black women. She is a good singer and performer. She is glamorous. She is an icon."

SHOW TIME

Jazz family

Kaaren, who formally trained as an actress at the School of Fine Arts in Boston University, grew up in a very musical household.

"My parents played a lot of jazz," she says. "I took piano lessons as a kid. Early on, I knew that music was my passion." She was "inspired and influenced" by Ella Fitzgerald, Aretha Franklin, Chaka Khan and Patti Austin. Austin is "fantastic," she notes.

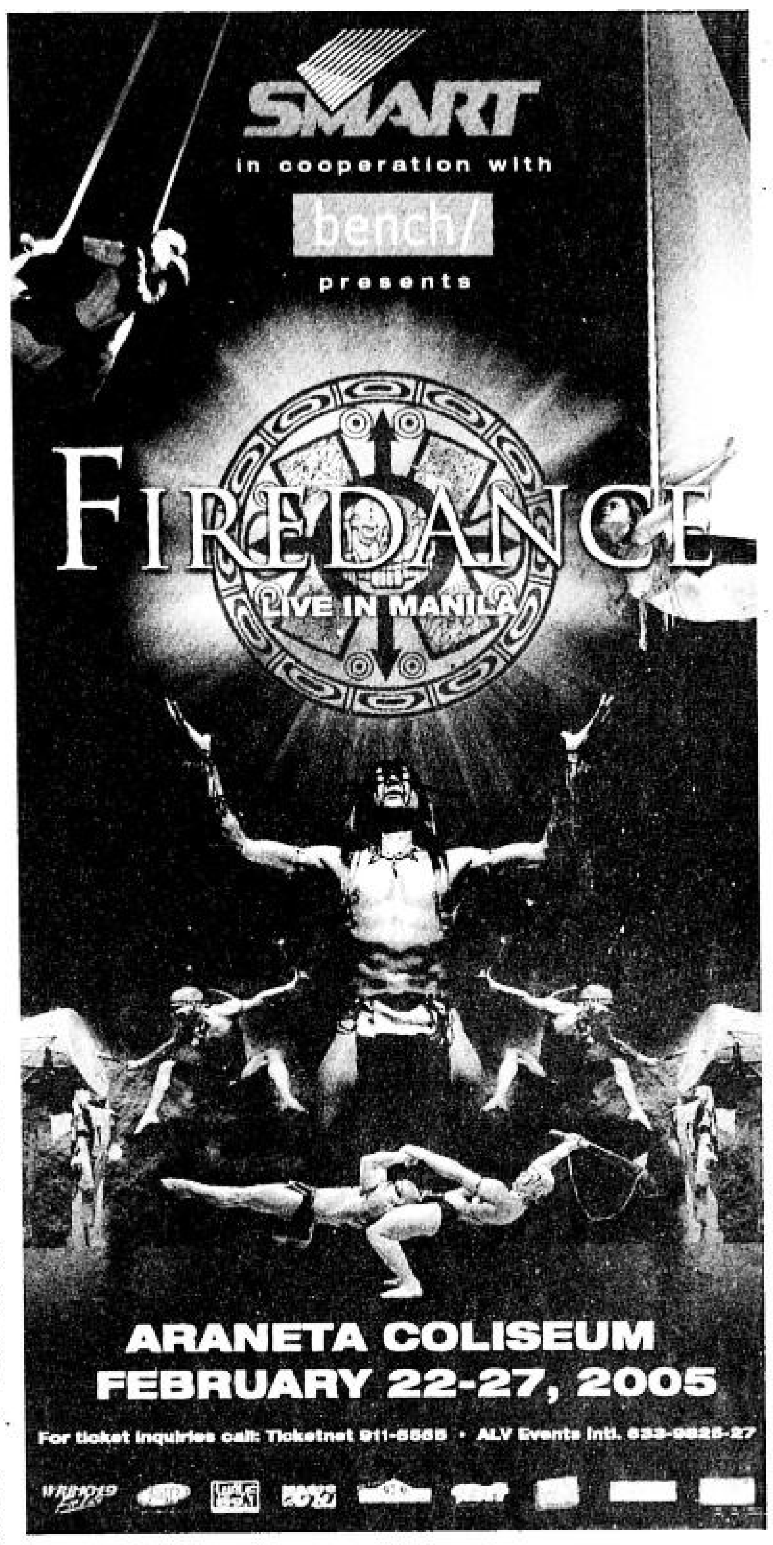
She listens "to all kinds of music," but is partial to R&B and jazz, of course.

Of the younger artists, Kaaren is placing her bets on Grammy winners India Arie and Alicia Keys. She singles out Destiny's Child as The Supremes' heiresses apparent, and thinks Beyoncé Knowles is a real gem.

Kaaren has appeared in the Broadway musicals "Eubie," "Balm in the Gilead" and "The Little Shop of Horrors," and was the "featured ingénue" of the New York-based National Shakespeare Company. She has very definite opinions about the hit show "Dreamgirls," widely perceived as the story of the Supremes.

"I don't think so," she says. "It's a [composite] of the stories of a lot of girl groups in the

EVERY/2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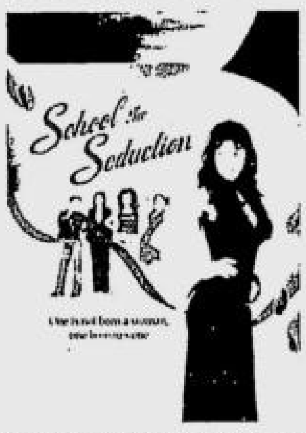

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3 HAYOP SA PORMA, HAYOP SA GANDA
4 MEET THE FOCKERS

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WAZZUP WITH CITIBANKS' NEW CARD
Drew Arellano (left) and Bianca Valerio (3rd from left) of "Wazzup Wazzup" join Citibank Vice Presidents for Cards Acquisition Bea Tan (2nd from left) and Sonya Perez during the recent launch of Citibank's newest credit card, the Citibank Cash Back Card. The new card redefines the concept of rewards for consumer spending by offering cardholders cash rebates from 0.5 percent to as high as 2.5 percent for all charges made to the card. Citibank is also offering a 3 percent cash back on dining expenses, utility bills and tuition fees on top of the regular cash back rate from now until June 30. The rebates are automatically credited in the cardholders' billing statement, providing immediate savings on interest payments and effectively reducing cardholders' monthly credit card bills.

Ayen's new single from 'Thankful'

AFTER the release of her carrier single "Kailan Nga Ba" from her second album, "Thankful," the beautiful Ayen Munji-Laurel hits the airwaves again with her second single, "Kapag Puso'y Nagtatampo."

"Kapag Puso'y Nagtatampo" was published by Margot Gallardo, with music by Babsie Molina, lyrics by Edith Gallardo and musical arrangement by Marc Lopez. Acoustic guitars were provided by Ric Mercado.

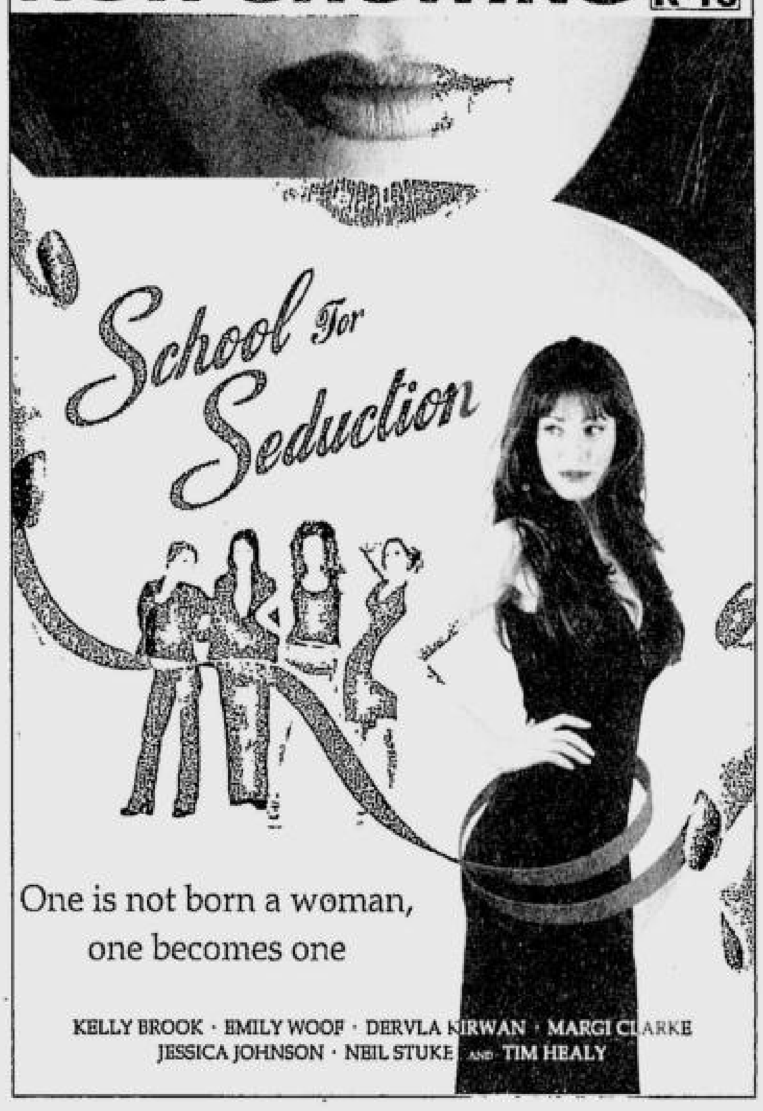
"Thankful" the album is a Margot Gallardo production for ML Entertainment Inc. The album's executive producer is Cynthia Bayaborda.

On Valentine's Day, Ayen will be the special guest of actors Christopher de Leon and Tirso Cruz III in a concert titled "A Cupid's Tender Mess (A Funny Valentine)" at the Grand Ballroom of Dusit Hotel.

Musical director is Mel Villena.

AYEN'S new single is called "Kapag Puso'y Nagtatampo"

NOW SHOWING MTRCB RATING R-13



One is not born a woman, one becomes one

KELLY BROOK · EMILY WOOF · DERVLA KIRWAN · MARGI CLARKE
JESSICA JOHNSON · NEIL STUKE AND TIM HEALY

Every inch...

From page 1

'60s and '70s. It's a fun show. I saw that musical and I loved it!"

Would she ever consider joining the cast of "Dreamgirls?"

"I can't," she gasps. "We [The Sounds of the Supremes] are so busy ... on the road seven months a year since 1989. We've performed in over 40 countries. I wish I could take some time out, but I love working with the group."

Memories of '98

In 1998, Kaaren's Supremes batch performed in Manila with the Fifth Dimension and The Stylistics. "We had a ball," she says.

Of the original Supremes songs, she likes "Someday We'll Be Together" best "for its sentiments." But what she loves to perform is "Stop in the Name of Love," because "audiences everywhere appreciate it so much!"

Next month, The Sounds of the Supremes (Kaaren, Kathy Merrick and Althea Burkhalter) will star in a two-night concert, "Greatest Hits of Motown," with other Motor City hit makers like The Miracles, Ollie Woodson and the Temptations, and the JR Walkers All-Star Band.

Set on Feb. 13 and 14 at the Araneta Coliseum, the show is produced by Viva Concerts.

What makes Motown music distinct and timeless?

He answer is swift and sure: "The writers and composers who crafted so many different songs and sounds, and the innovative musicians who created the music in the studio."

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6 GOLD (SDDS) KUNG FU HUSTLE
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6 BLADE TRINITY

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

CONCERT PRODUCER. Ogie's first project is his own Valentine show at Music Museum, Feb. 13 and 14.

Romancing Ogie Alcasid

OGIE Alcasid looks back at the year 2004 with special fondness, when the singer-composer's winning streak continued with his shows, concerts and records, here and abroad.

He also continued to win awards, such as Best TV Host and Best Male Comedy Actor of the Star Awards, and Most Outstanding Male TV Host of the Enpress Awards.

This year, Ogie embarks on a new career as a concert producer. And his first venture is his own two-night Valentine concert. The show, "Power of Love," will be a night full of love and romance. It will have '80s songs especially rearranged to suit the mood for love.

Ogie will sing Barry Manilow and Kenny Rankin as well as selections from his new album, "I Am a Singer," especially his "Tanging Pag-Ibig," now a Top 10 hit on OPM Myx and on FM stations all over the country.

Ogie's guests in "Power of Love" are Rachelle Ann Go, Iya Villania and R&B concert princess Kyla.

"Power of Love" will be held on Feb. 13 and 14 at the Music Museum. Showtime is 8 p.m.

Musical direction is by Archie Castillo and stage direction is by GB Sampedro.

Tickets are available at Ticketworld (891-5610, 891-9999) and Music Museum (721-6726).

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ITS ALL ABOUT LOVE PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:15	WHITE NOISE PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	ELEKTRA PG13 11:40,1:50,4:00, 6:10,8:20,10:30

star group of cinemas movie guide

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ITS ALL ABOUT LOVE	1:50 4:10 6:30 9:00
WHITE NOISE	2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00
KUNG FU HUSTLE	1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50
OCEAN'S TWELVE	1:50 4:20 6:50 9:20

ALI MALL CINEMAS

1	Dolby	ELEKTRA	10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
2	SDDS	MEET THE FOCKERS	12:45 3:15 5:45 8:15
3	dts	BLADE: TRINITY	11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50
4	Dolby	SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION	12:45 3:15 5:45 8:15
5	Dolby	HAYOP SA PORMA	12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:20

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2	MEET THE FOCKERS	11:50, 2:20, 4:50 7:20, 10:20 PG-13
3	ELEKTRA	11:45, 2:25, 5:05 7:45, 10:25 PG-13
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② ELEKTRA
FS 11:20AM, 2:00PM, 4:40PM, 7:20PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG - 13)

③ ITS ALL ABOUT LOVE
FS 12:20PM, 2:45PM, 5:10PM, 7:35PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG-13)

④ MEET THE FOCKERS
FS 12:00PM, 2:30PM, 5:00PM, 7:30PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG - 13)

PREMIERE THEATRE MEET THE FOCKERS
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2 MEET THE FOCKERS 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00	7 WHITE NOISE 12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40
3 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00	8 KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
4 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	9 BLADE TRINITY 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 ELEKTRA 11:30 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30	10 MADHOUSE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

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4 RESERVE	7 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:50

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1 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10	5 MEET THE FOCKERS 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:30 10:30
2 ELEKTRA 10:10 12:45 3:20 5:55 8:30	6 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 8:45 10:30
3 MADHOUSE 10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00	7 ELEKTRA 12:10 2:45 5:20 7:55 10:30
4 WHITE NOISE 11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10	8 BLADE TRINITY 11.50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 ELEKTRA 10:10 12:45 3:20 5:55 8:30	5 MEET THE FOCKERS 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
2 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25	6 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
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1 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30	3 WHITE NOISE 11:30 1:45 4:00 6.15 8:30
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:30 1:45 4:00 6:15 8:30	4 SAPLOT 11:20 1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30

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1 ELEKTRA 11:40 1:50 4.00 6:10 8:20	3 WHITE NOISE 12:45 3:15 5:45 6:15
2 MEET THE FOCKERS 10:45 1:15 3:45 6:15 8:45	4 BLADE TRINITY 12.50 3:30 6:10 8:50

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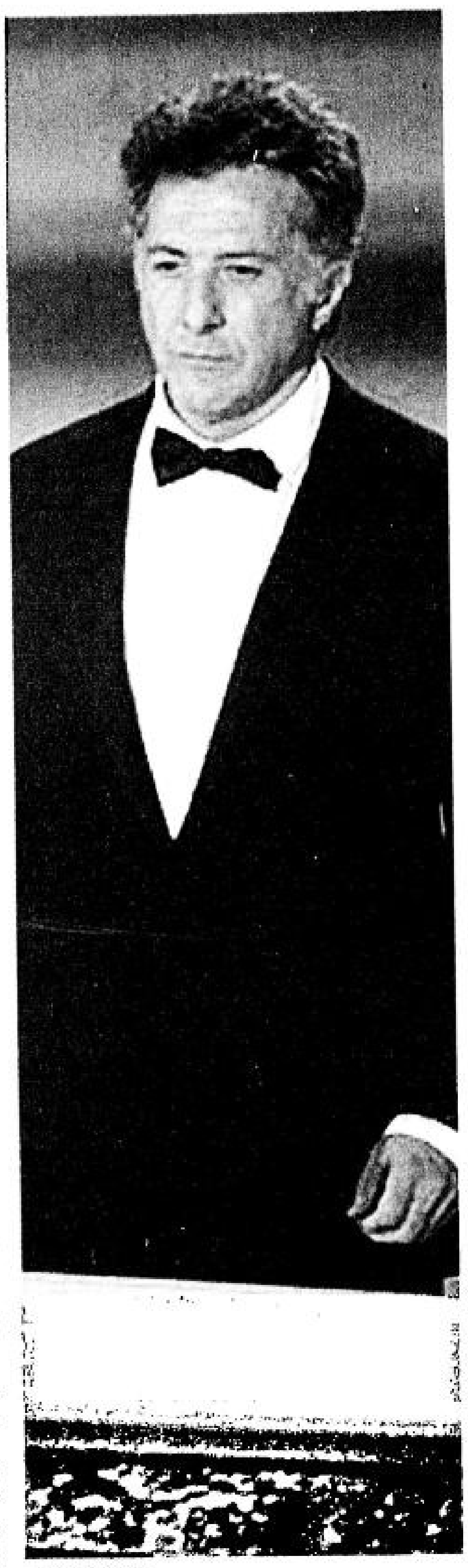
Hoffman slams film industry for being money-hungry, marketing-focused

'I thought I would stop and just try writing and directing. I wasn't aware of the depression that set in'



HOFFMAN

LONDON—Multiple Oscar winner Dustin Hoffman lamented the state of modern filmmaking on Tuesday, using a promotional session for his latest feature to pan a money-hungry marketing-focused industry.

"The whole culture is in the craphouse," Hoffman told journalists gathered in London to hear him promote his latest comedy vehicle "Meet the Fockers."

"You go to the cinema and you realize you're watching the third act," he said. "There is no first or second act.

"There is this massive filmmaking where you spend this incredible amount of money and play right to the demographic.

"You can tell how much money the film is going to make by how it does on the first weekend."

Hoffman, a seven-time Oscar nominee who won twice as best actor for "Rain Man" and "Kramer vs Kramer," said the quality crisis extended from film to the stage.

"The whole culture is in the craphouse," he declared. "It's not just true in the movies, it's also true in the theater. Broadway, and now London is the same, special effects are in great demand. It's not a good time culturally."

The 67-year-old actor, who has chalked up a full roster of recent supporting parts, said he had stopped working a few years back because he had "lost the spark I always had."

"Studios weren't interested in the kind of films that people of my generation wanted to see.

"I thought I would stop and just try writing and directing. I wasn't aware of the depression that set in."

But the past year has seen him pop up in features including "I Heart Huckabees," "Finding Neverland" and now "Meet the Fockers," also starring Robert De Niro, Barbra Streisand and Ben Stiller. *AFP*

"IF YOU really want something, you just have to keep working to make it happen," says young actor Frank Muniz, the voice of Stripes (with Hayden Panettiere) of the lesson the animal teaches.

The zebra who thinks he's a racehorse

SHOW TIME

"RACING Stripes," a $65-million film from Warner Bros. Pictures, is about a zebra who thinks he is a racehorse.

The special effects-driven family movie took five years to make.

In the midst of a raging thunderstorm, the traveling circus accidentally leaves behind a very precious cargo, a baby zebra (voiced by Frankie Muniz). The gangly foal is rescued by horse farmer Nolan Walsh (Bruce Greenwood), who takes him home to his young daughter Channing (Hayden Panettiere). Once a champion thoroughbred trainer, Walsh has given up horse training for a quiet life with Channing on their modest Kentucky farm.

The little zebra or "Stripes," as Channing calls him, is soon introduced to the farm's troupe of misfits, led by a grumpy Shetland Pony named Tucker (voiced by Dustin Hoffman) and Franny (voiced by Whoopi Goldberg), a wise old goat who keeps the family in line. The group is joined by Goose (voiced by Joe Pantoliano), a deranged big-city pelican hiding out in the sticks until the heat dies down in Jersey. Bird-brained rooster Reggie (voiced by Jeff Foxworthy) keeps everyone alert with his crack-of-dawn crowing and general hysteria, and the un-aptly named bloodhound Lightning (voiced by Snoop Dog) keeps a lazy eye on the farm goings-on ... between naps.

Taking off

The Walsh farm borders the Dalrymple Estate, where highly skilled thoroughbreds train to compete in the ultra-prestigious Kentucky Open., From the moment Stripes lays eyes on the track, he's hooked—he knows that, given a chance, he could make all the other horses eat dust. With characteristic zeal, he devotes himself to training for the big time with a little help from Tucker, who has coached a host of champion racehorses in the past.

Channing longs to train as a jockey, but her protective father refuses to let her compete in the potentially dangerous sport. But her enthusiasm (or stubbornness) is hard to quell, and she eventually convinces him to come out of retirement and train her and Stripes.

The road to "Racing Stripes" began at a racetrack where executive producer Steve Wegner and screenwriter buddy Dave Schmidt were betting five years ago. "We thought a racetrack environment would make a great film setting," recalls Wagner. "We started thinking: in horseracing, where bloodline is everything, what would happen if a non-thoroughbred wanted to race?"

The story was a natural for Alcon Entertainment co-presidents Andrew A. Kosove and Broderick Johnson, producers of a catalog of diverse films, including "Insomnia," "Dude, Where's My Car?" and "My Dog Skip."

"As a company, we never wanted to be held to one genre," says Johnson. "It's really about making quality films and making them responsibly. We love comedy, we love family films. 'Racing Stripes' is a very funny and heartwarming story."

Against all odds

Director Frederick Du Chau was quickly brought on board. He and writing partner Kirk Demicco took the story in a novel direction, pushing the fish-out-of-water concept further by introducing an even unlikelier contender for horse-racing stardom: a zebra.

"That jump-started the movie," says Wegner. "Seeing a zebra on the tracks, racing thoroughbreds, is such a great image. 'Racing Stripes' became the story of someone going against all odds to be a champion."

The film's large interspecies ensemble required a two-tiered casting process. The filmmakers needed actors both to lend voice to the animal characters and to play the human roles.

The first hurdle was to give Stripes a voice, and producers found it in talented young actor Frankie Muniz, star of the hit TV show, "Malcolm in the Middle."

"All Stripes wants to be is to train to be number one," says Muniz. "He doesn't ever give up, so there's a great message—if you really want something, you just have to keep working to make it happen."

Grumpy barnyard patriarch Tucker, a Shetland pony and former coach, is voiced by Dustin Hoffman. The two-time Academy Award winner saw a fresh challenge in the job: "I've never done voice-over work or animation and you always want to do something new."

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MUSIC, DANCE ... FRIENDS! Children from the Shanghai Little Companion Art Troupe, the performing arts arm of the China Welfare Institute founded by Soong Ching Ling, and the Loboc Children's Choir will perform in "Making Friends... A Night of Performances by Children From Shanghai and Loboc," on Thursday, Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m., at the Meralco Theater in Pasig City. Organized by the Philippine Soong Ching Ling Foundation, the event brings to Manila a delegation of 30 children from the Little Companion Art Troupe who will dance, sing and play instruments. Joining them is the Loboc Children's Choir, national champion in children's choirs category in the National Music Competitions for Young Artists in 2001, 1995 and 1993. "Making Friends... A Night of Performances by Children From Shanghai and Loboc" is being held in partnership with Oishi, Bench, Metropolitan Museum and ABS-CBN Bantay Bata 163. For details, call 8448441 local 136.

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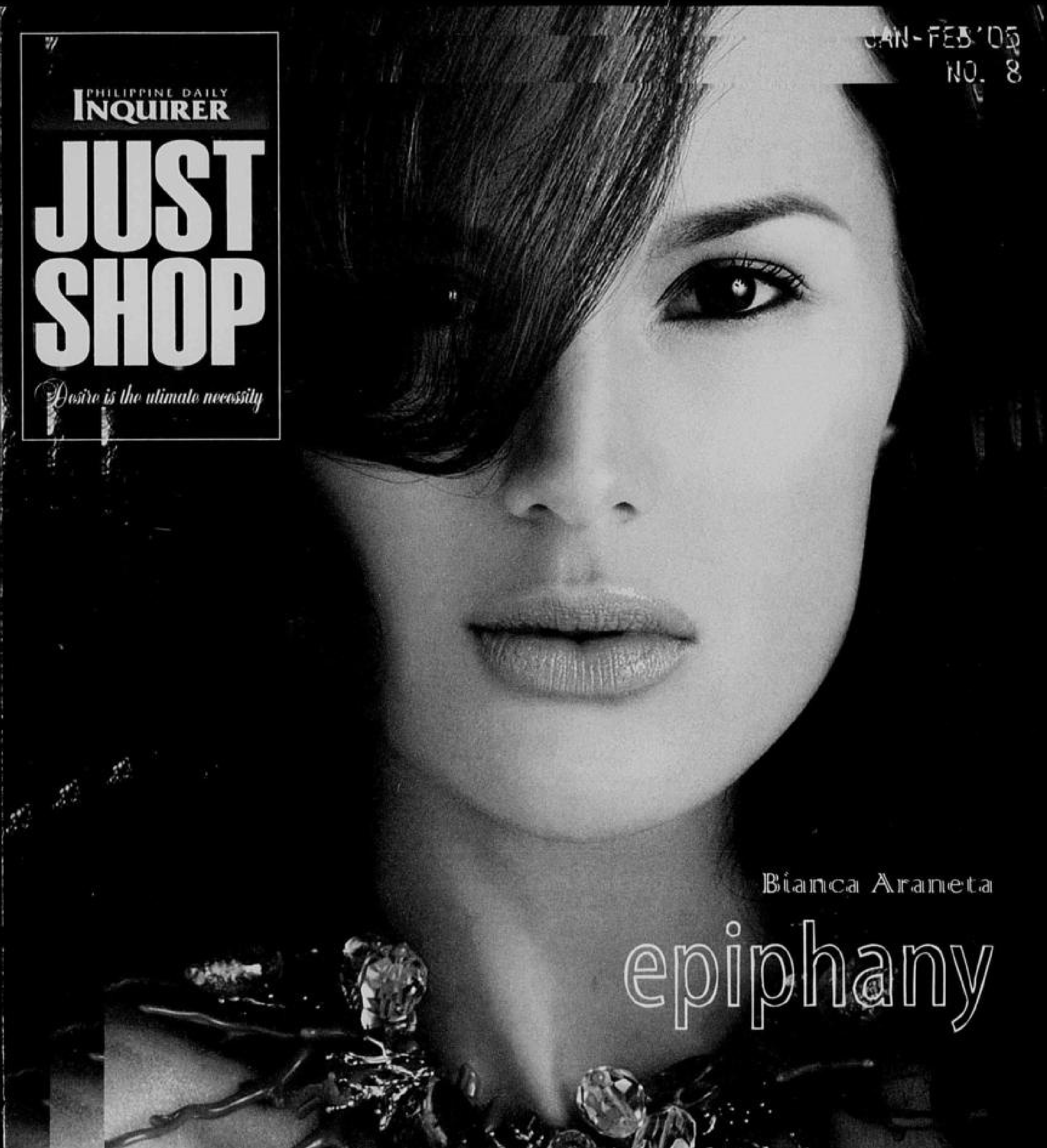

Bianca Araneta

epiphany

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Styling **JENNI EPPERSON**
Digital Imaging **DIX**
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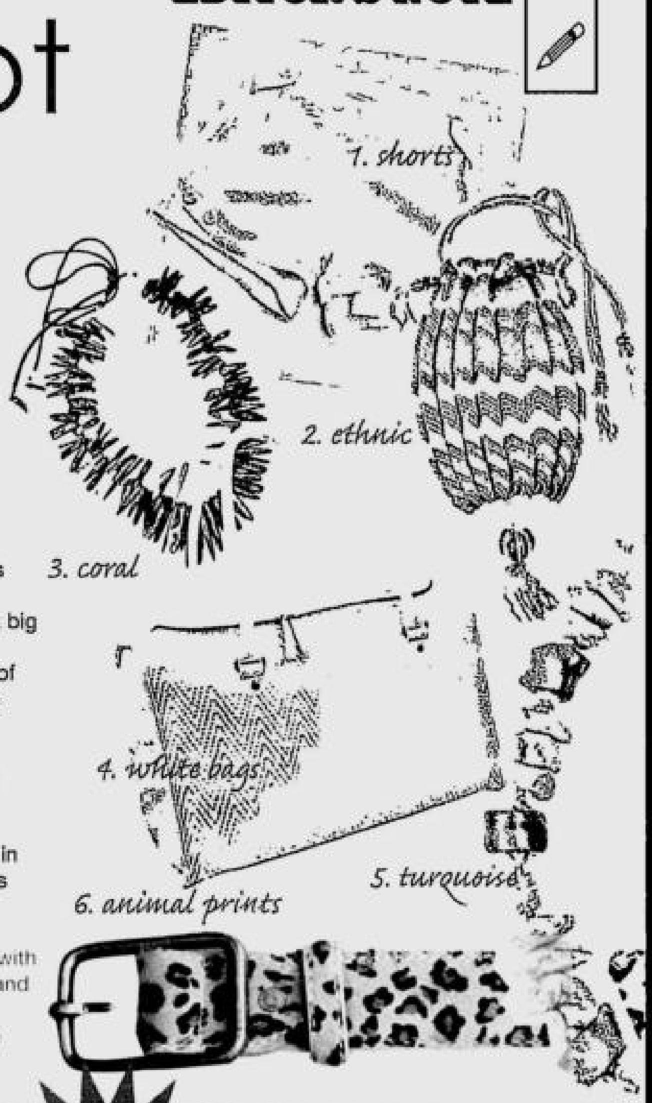
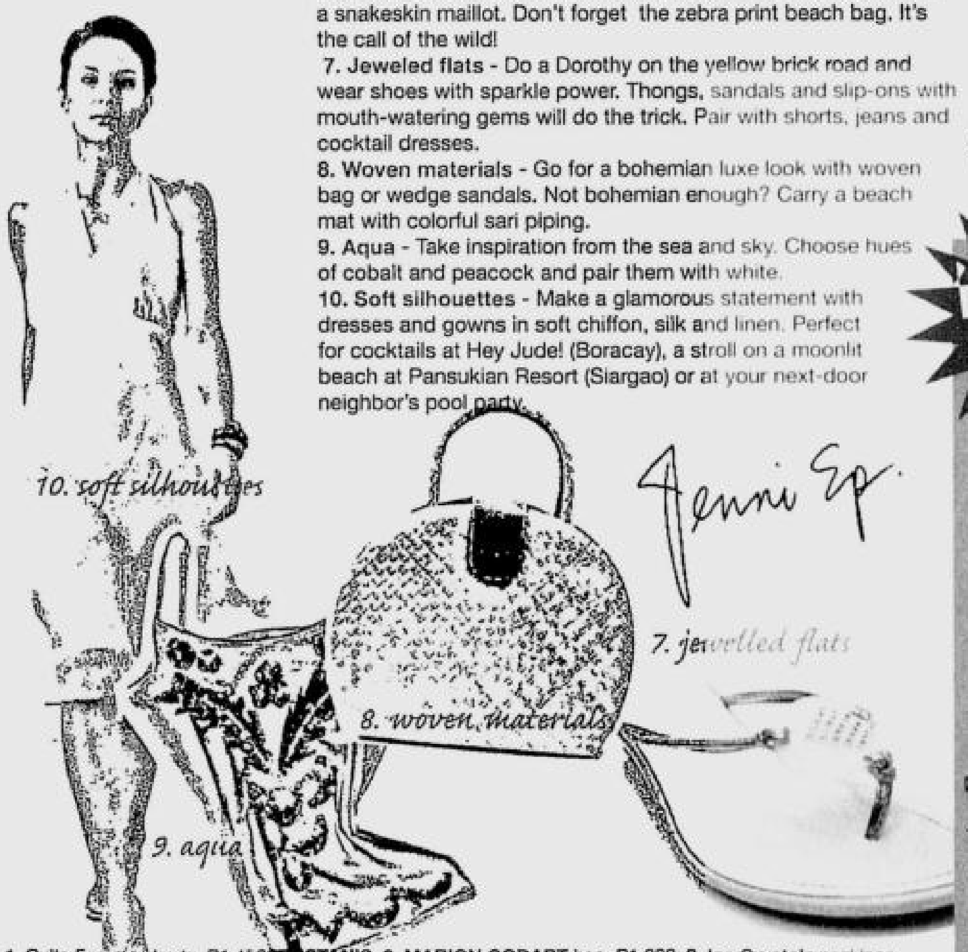
what's hot for 2005

Year 2005 brings a multitude of styles to quench the fashion thirst of *fashionistas* and *shoppingeras*. Here are the top 10 trends and our suggestions on how to make this year's look work for you.

1. Shorts - Trade in your minis for this season's not-so-short shorts. Go for folded hems, Bermudas and just-above-the-knee lengths.
2. Ethnic- Pair indigenous prints with hip pieces like gauchos and denim jeans. There's definitely nothing primitive about this look.
3. Coral - Scorch your basic outfit with red-hot orange. Wear it big and bold. Perfect on and off the beach.
4. White bags - Neutralize all those dizzying, summery colors of your ensemble with a white bag. It freshens any look under the sun.
5. Turquoise - Pile on chunky azure stones on your white strapless dress or on your favorite tank top. Think beyond the sea.
6. Animal prints -Go wild this summer with tiger, leopard, snakeskin and zebra prints. Slip into tiger print tunic or suit up in a snakeskin maillot. Don't forget the zebra print beach bag. It's the call of the wild!
7. Jeweled flats - Do a Dorothy on the yellow brick road and wear shoes with sparkle power. Thongs, sandals and slip-ons with mouth-watering gems will do the trick. Pair with shorts, jeans and cocktail dresses.
8. Woven materials - Go for a bohemian luxe look with woven bag or wedge sandals. Not bohemian enough? Carry a beach mat with colorful sari piping.
9. Aqua - Take inspiration from the sea and sky. Choose hues of cobalt and peacock and pair them with white.
10. Soft silhouettes - Make a glamorous statement with dresses and gowns in soft chiffon, silk and linen. Perfect for cocktails at Hey Jude! (Boracay), a stroll on a moonlit beach at Pansukian Resort (Siargao) or at your next-door neighbor's pool party.

Jenni Ep.





1. Culte Femme shorts, P1,450; RUSTAN'S; 2. **MARION GODART** bag, P1,880; 3. Ice Crystals necklace, price available upon request, **RUSTAN'S**; 4. **CK CALVIN KLEIN** bag, P9,950; 5. **THE RED JASPER** necklace, P4,950; 6. **PREVIEW** belt, P850; 7. Alberto G&G shoe, P1,900, **OFFICINE**; 8. **ARANAZ MANILA** bag, P1,100; 9. **NULLAH** top, P1,690; 10. **JESSICA** dress, P7,250. Photography **DIX**

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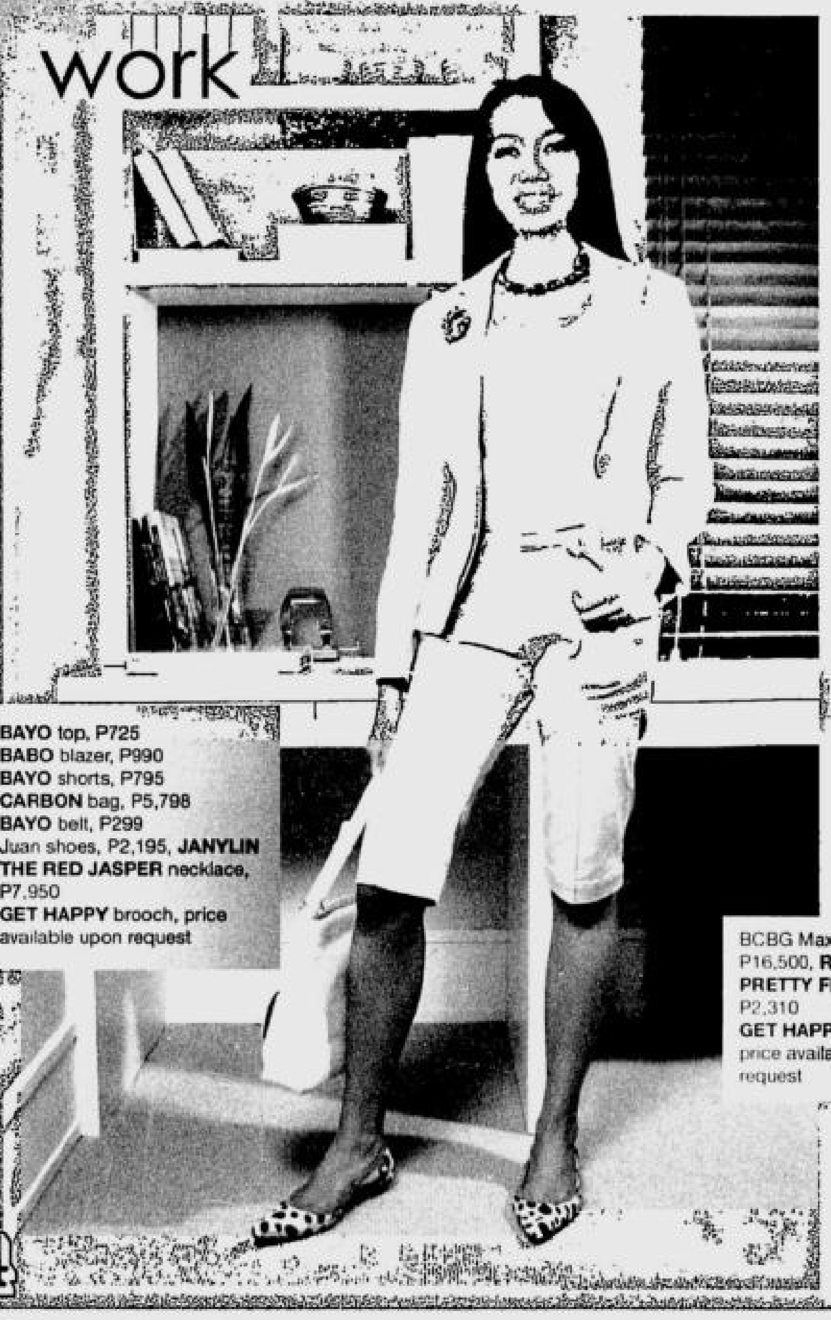
I'd love to get your comments or suggestions. E-mail me at jenni_shops@inquirer.com.ph or text INQUIRER JSHOP NAME/CITY/MESSAGE to 2207 for Globe or 283 for Smart subscribers.

Close-up Moment

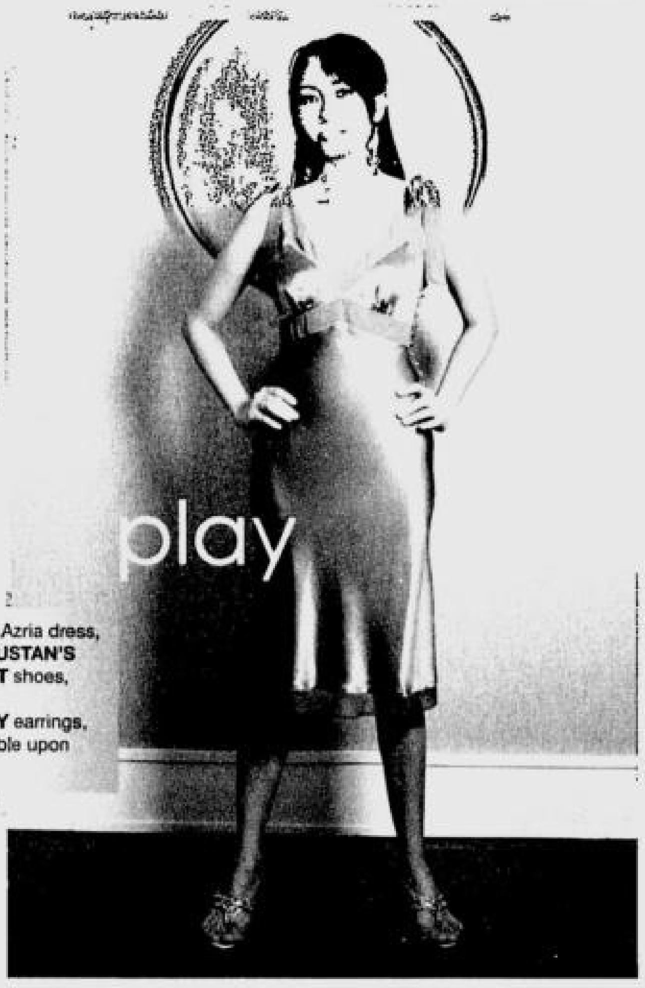
[illegible] de Villa: Casual Sal is ready for her close-up. JUST SHOP chucks the jeans and tees and livens up this lady's wardrobe with hot new colors for her moment in the limelight.

Photography DIX
Styling JENNI EPPERSON
Makeup KEN PAGASPAS
Hair ROMAN GRAVADOR
Shot on location at Joya showroom at [illegible]
Special thanks to Mr. J.P. [illegible]

Name: Claire Pascua
Age: 26
Last Starring Role: Assitant Brand Manager – Close Up, Unilever, Philippines, Inc.
Proposed Movie Character: Casual Sal
Possible Movie Titles:
Turning Casual Sal Into A Fashion Star
Deconstructing Casual Sal (A True Test Of Fashion Limits)



BAYO top, P725
BABO blazer, P990
BAYO shorts, P795
CARBON bag, P5,798
BAYO belt, P299
Juan shoes, P2,195, **JANYLIN THE RED JASPER** necklace, P7,950
GET HAPPY brooch, price available upon request



BCBG Max Azria dress, P16,500, **RUSTAN'S PRETTY FIT** shoes, P2,310
GET HAPPY earrings, price available upon request

Naturalizer

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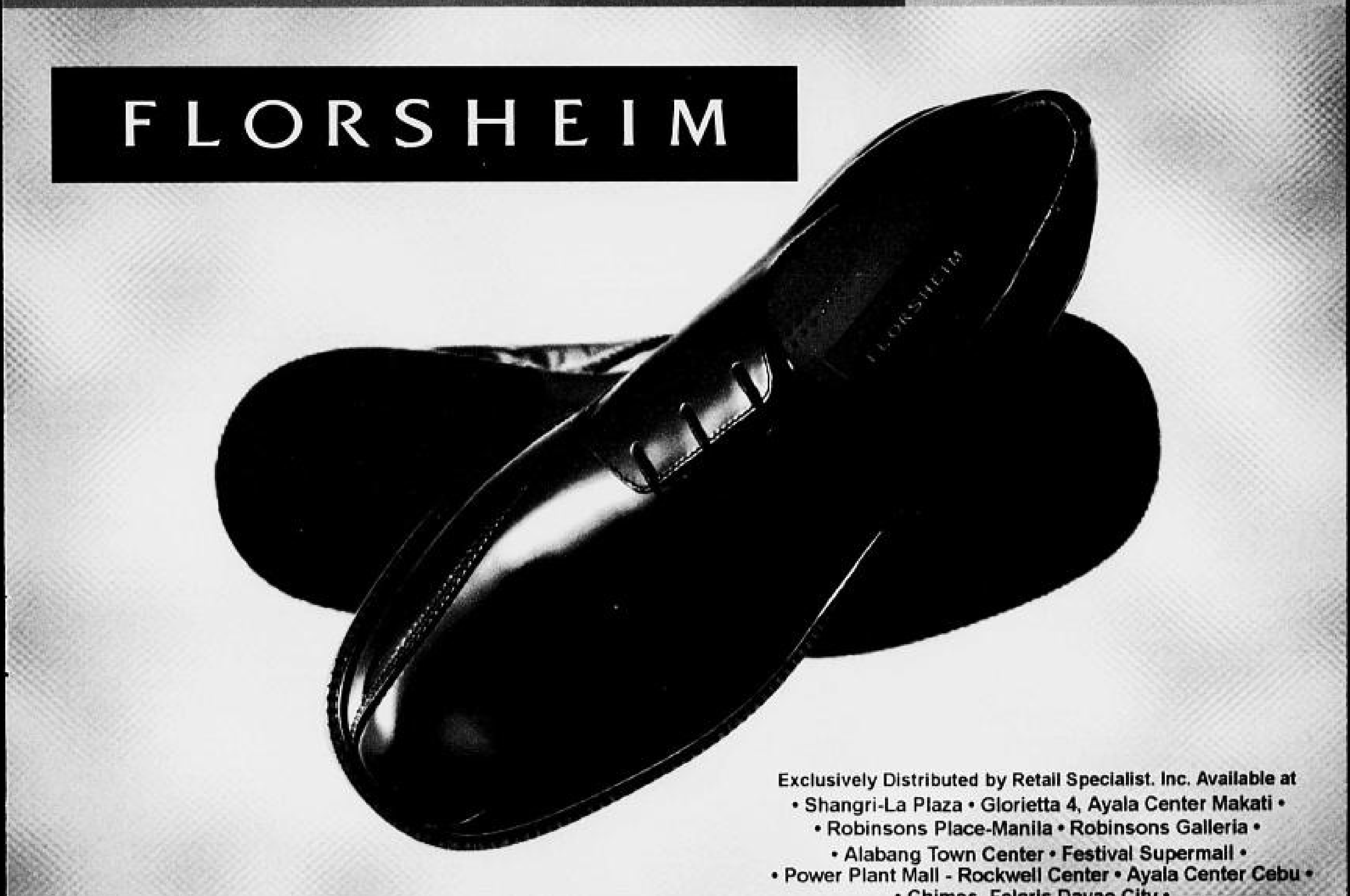

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JUST SHOP ESSAY

Fashionably Down-to-earth

by Leica R. Carpo

I write this in fashion Siberia, better known as suburban California -- the land of jogging pants and trainers. I have been asked to write about the next big thing in fashion -- a good way to check if my fashion radar is still working.

I am on my own, cut off from my designer friends and fashionista buddies who have always supplied me with their sharply edited summaries of the latest "must-haves" and "fashion faux pas" during our regular chismis sessions. I am surrounded by people whose fashion motto is simply to wear clothes which are comfortable and practical, and not as a way to express yourself in relation to or against the latest trend.

San Franciscans in general, unlike New Yorkers or Manileños, choose not to intellectualize, rhapsodize over, or talk about fashion. This is the land where **Gap**, **Abercrombie & Fitch** mail order catalogs outnumber **Vogue** and **Wallpaper** mags.

With my deadline near, I find myself rifling through magazines, watching fashion police TV and searching the racks in outlet stores, discount emporiums, and specialty boutiques in a mad quest for that one article of fashion that could be the next big thing...

All the magazines and my current state of being very pregnant scream — the first priority should be to find the perfect flat shoes! Metallic **Havaianas** and **Paul Smith** canvas sneakers aside, the pair should be savvy enough to work cocktail parties and boardroom meetings—already a tall order.

How do I find a pair of flat shoes that I can incorporate into my micro-mini skirt, bootleg and poncho-filled wardrobe and which would make my athletic, non-model stems look long and toned?

And where do I begin? Designer Row of course!

Here's how I found the perfect flats, or my version of it.

I tried on a slew of them: From the latest **Prada** beaded moccasins -- a flashback of my college days -- to **Coach**'s pine green, suede, classic round, toe-ballet flats -- another flashback of my college days. They looked passable but when it was time to fork over the dough, I found myself holding back. The shoes didn't make my toes tingle -- my indicator of a fashion "high five."

GAP
OPEN
Rina Albert

illustration by **Rina Albert**

Since designer fashion failed to excite, I checked out tried-and-tested formula boutiques, the likes of **Banana Republic**, **Club Monaco**, **Nine West** and **Ann Taylor**, which offered tamer and moderately-priced versions of the runway look. Here, fearlessly road testing a new trend was easier since mistakes were not as pocketbook-painful.

Again, they were B-O-R-I-N-G! There was nothing edgy or fun enough to take a chance on.

Desperate, I hit unknown stores, perused mysterious brands and decided on a "warm-up flat shoe." This was a hybrid version of flats and my fave wardrobe staple—boots.

Amazingly, I found my flat shoes in a boutique recommended by my sister Chesca (who never buys anything not on sale) called **Charlotte Russe**.

I have never heard of the store and it was my first time in the place. Surprise, surprise! They were **Dolce & Gabbana /Juicy Couture** knockoffs with **Topshop** prices. I thought: I could walk out of this store looking very Euro-cool or red-light-district wrong.

Enough said.

The shoe that had my name on it had the label **Sherpa Boots**. It came in two colors: mint green and raspberry suede. I opted for the **Prada** (circa late '90s shade) mint green pair. They worked with my skirts, despite being flat. They were funky, quirky and had this "milk maid" charm.

They imbued a homegrown appeal to my minis and infused a touch of casual chic to my bootlegs. They're actually reminiscent of Eskimo gear and the very popular **Ugg** shoes. It was love at first sight!

The boots of my past all had a rock 'n' roll /'60s vibe. My new *Sherpas* had less attitude and more lifestyle and a bohemian look that blended well with my current wardrobe. Wearing them made me want to curl up in bed with a good book and a cup of hot cocoa -- most likely what I would be doing in the coming weeks.

Don't worry. I am too much of a fashionista to turn garnola-chic. While the idea of never having to dry clean or stress about proper accessorizing is alluring,

I long to be back in the overdone but addictingly familiar scene of Manila society. Come summer, I am looking forward to giving my *Sherpas* a rest, whipping out my bikini and heading to Boracay, mojito in hand...hopefully wearing the coolest fashion thing this year—flats to-die-for.

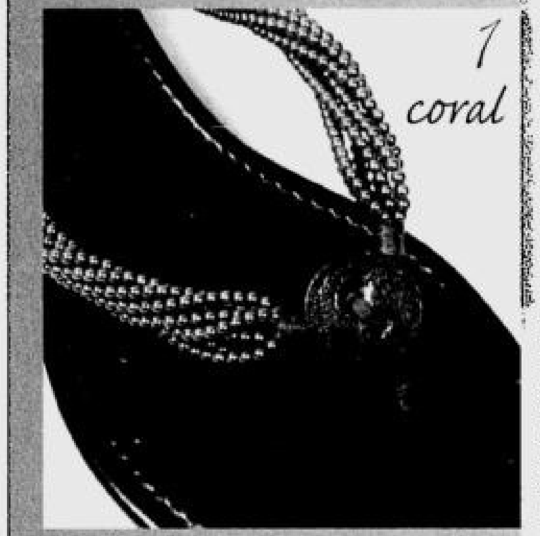
With my deadline near, I find myself rifling through magazines, watching fashion police TV and searching the racks in outlet stores, discount emporiums, and specialty boutiques in a mad quest for that one article of fashion that could be the next big thing...

HOT 5

Summer accessories that add sizzle to any outfit

by **Amina Aranaz** //aaranaz@inquirer.com.ph

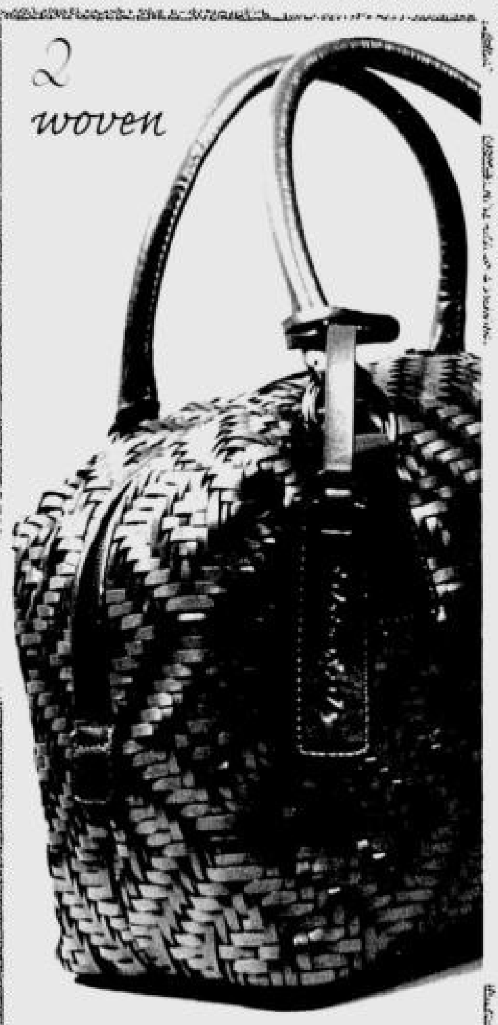
Put out to pasture those synthetic jelly kellys and plastic kitten-heeled flip-flops because 2005 is all about going back to nature. Think arts and crafts, handmade goodies and intricate details. Get the ultimate in ETHNIC CHIC with these five scorching trends.

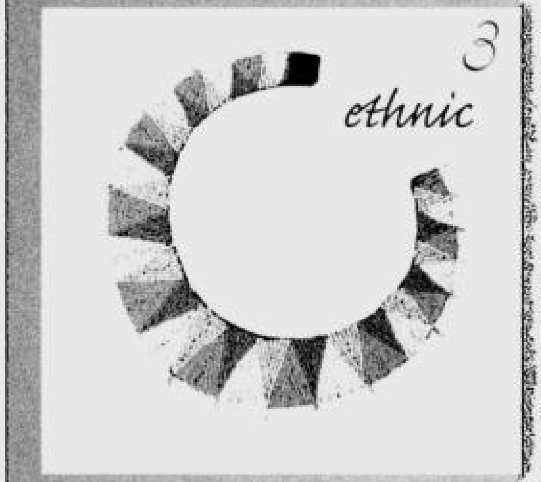


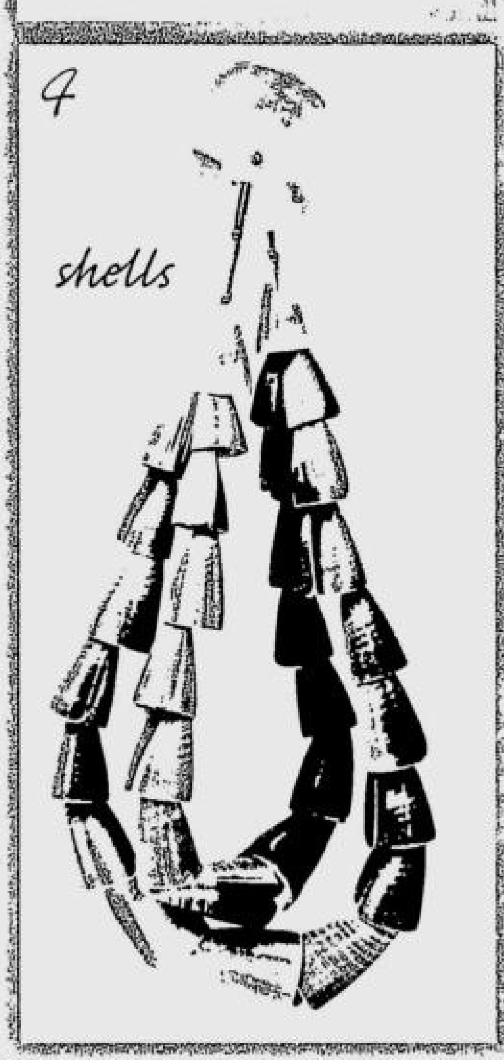
1. FRESH CORAL. Fresh-water corals adorn necks, embellish shoes and update bags. Live out your Little Mermaid fantasies in big rough cuts or polished stones. Unisa shoe, P3,299, **CMG.**

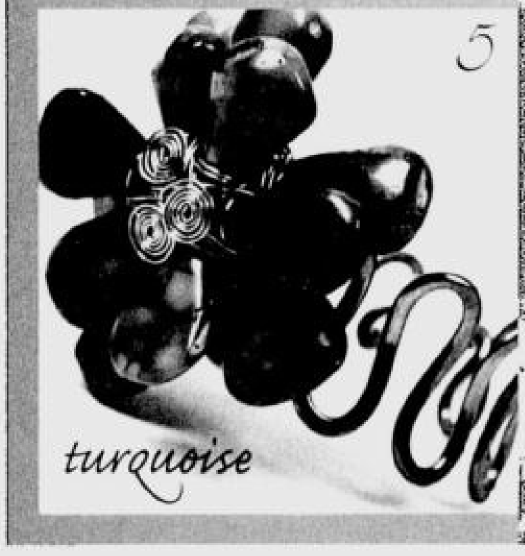
2. WEAVED WONDERS. Metallics make days seem brighter, intertwining materials such as wicker, cording and leather. Sabrina Scala bag, P4,299, **CMG.**

3. ETHNIC ACCENTS. Beads intricately strung together create stunning patterns. Spot them on stunning necklaces, wide cuffs and even shoes. **MARION GODART** necklace, P500.









4. SHELL GAME. Not the usual iridescent mother-of-pearl. This time, it's the real deal -- seashells in every shape and size. Even 24-K gold takes the form of these beachcomber finds! **MARION GODART** necklace, P1,750.

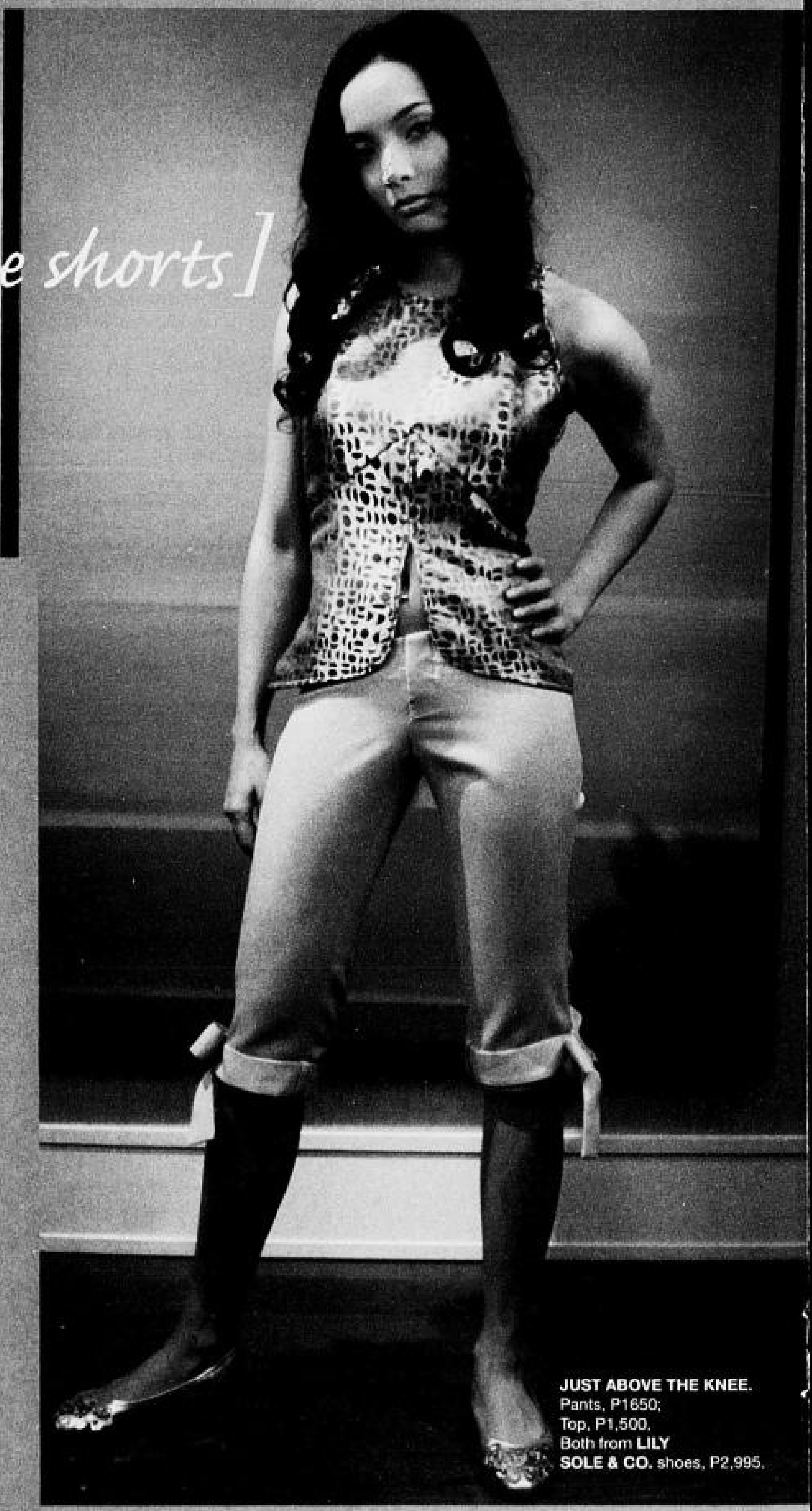
5. TURQUOISE SURPRISE. Something bluish-green this way comes. Mixed with gold, the precious stone has evolved into this year's raw-edged beauty. **CIARA CREATES** bangle, P1,200.

[the shorts]

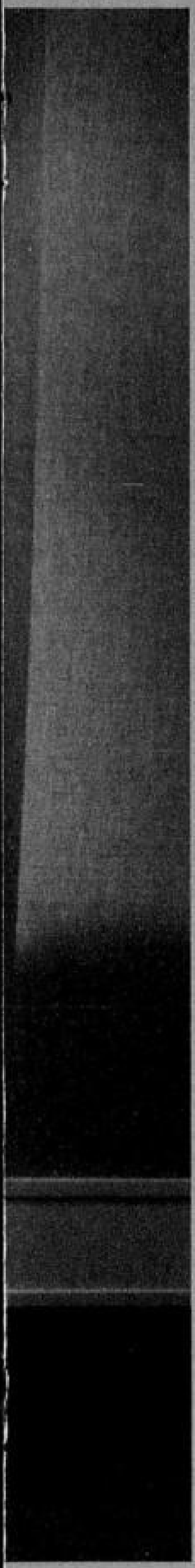
Lifestyle Trends at Rockwell

Hie off to the beach as early as February. Splash and burn but don't bury your head in the sand. Make waves with a colorful vibe and fun-loving styles from **Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell**.

Photography **DIX**
Styling **JENNI EPPERSON**
Makeup **KEN PAGASPAS**
Hair **ROMAN GRAVADOR**
Model **BIANCA FERNANDEZ**
Shot on location at **Joya showroom at Rockwell**
Special thanks to **Mr. JP Masakayan**

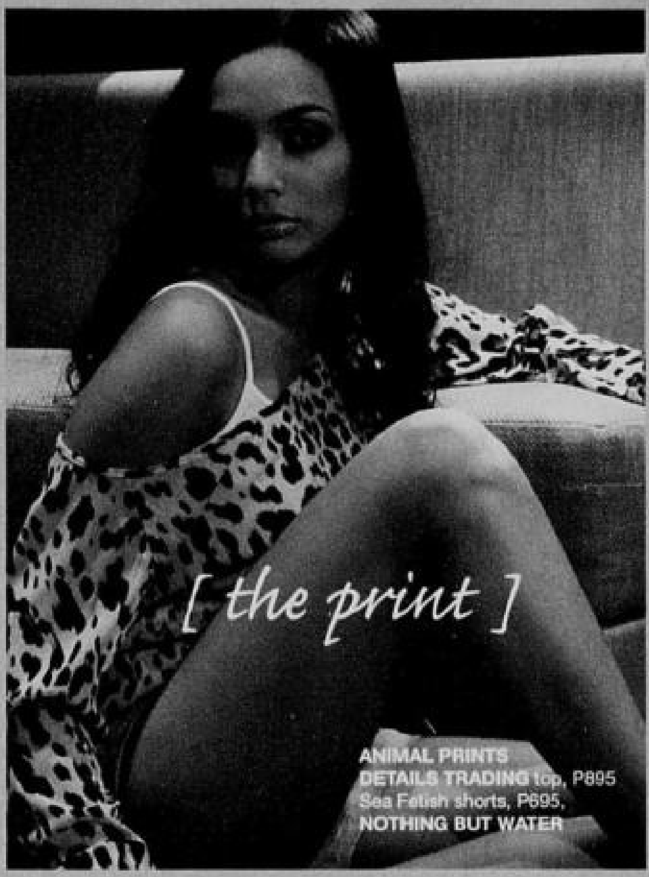


JUST ABOVE THE KNEE.
Pants, P1650;
Top, P1,500.
Both from **LILY**
SOLE & CO. shoes, P2,995.



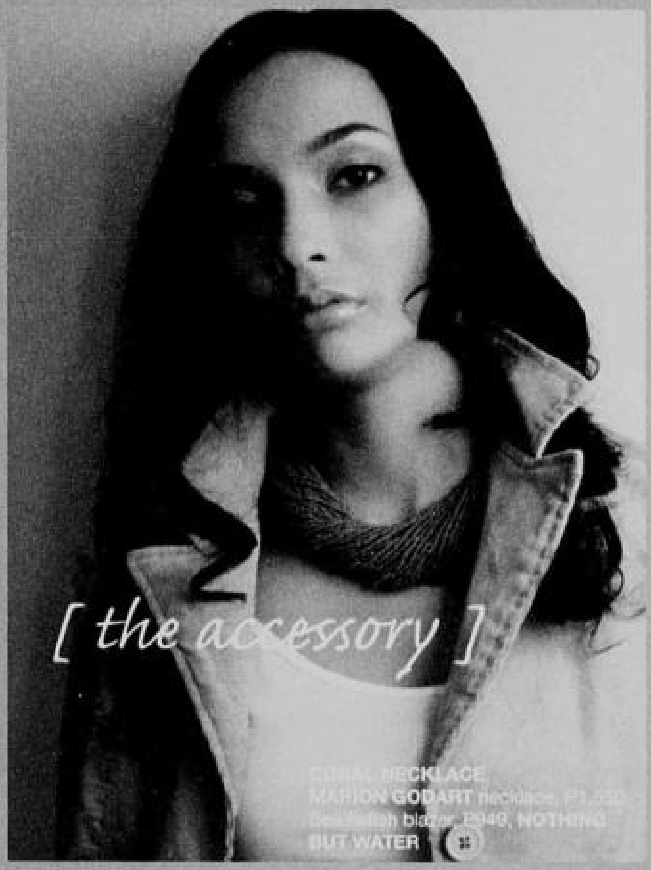
[the color]

EYE-POPPING BRIGHTS
NULLAH top, P990
DETAILS TRADING shorts, P795
THE RED JASPER necklace, P3,550



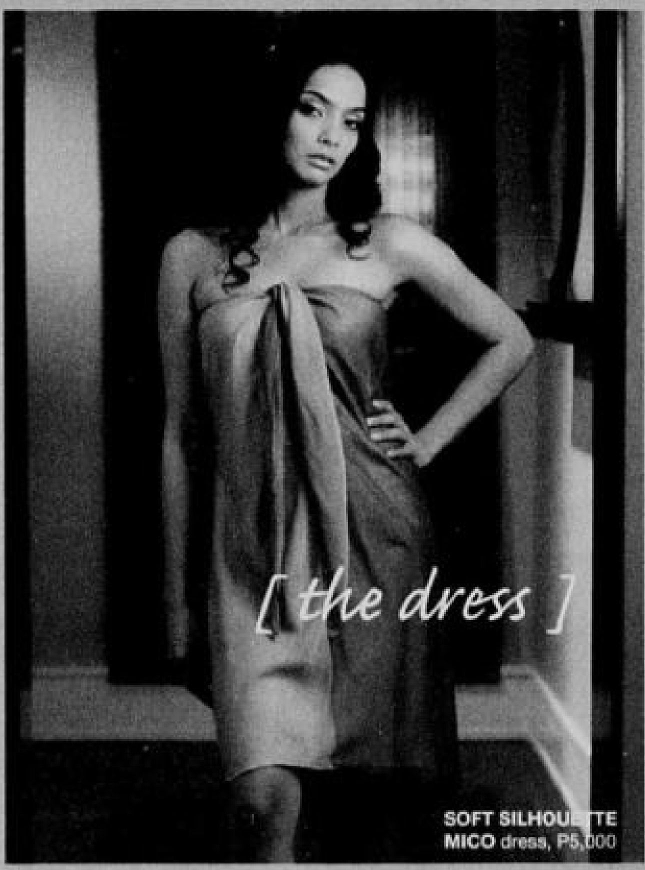
[the print]

ANIMAL PRINTS
DETAILS TRADING top, P895
Sea Fetish shorts, P695,
NOTHING BUT WATER



[the accessory]

CORAL NECKLACE
MARION GODART necklace, P1,5[illegible]
Sea Fetish blazer, P949, **NOTHING BUT WATER**



[the dress]

SOFT SILHOUETTE
MICO dress, P5,000

STORE FEATURE

Heir to the New Yorker throne, Liz with Creative Director Dennis

The divine 'Inspiration Room'

A sampling of their masterpiece creations

Take me to a night in New York-er

By [illegible]

Your fashion dreams do come true at the **NEW YORKER.**

If you learned your fashion alphabet in the age of **H&Ms** and **Zaras,** this legendary house of couture wouldn't ring a bell. But mention the **New Yorker** to your parents and grandparents and they'll rave and become nostalgic all at once.

Pilar Ver Romack opened the **New Yorker** in 1935. The Filipino house of fashion dressed up members of Manila's 400, the Social Register or the so-called crème de la crème.

It was the first to offer prêt-a-porter and later, haute couture.

Socialites, dignitaries and even members of royalty all went to the New Yorker famous for its exquisite detailing and superb tailoring.

Today, the **New Yorker** is run by **Elizabeth Romack-Lirag,** her daughter **Tina** and creative director **Dennis Resurrecion.** The boutique continues to be a treasure trove of fashion especially for Manila's A-list.

Ever wondered where **Tessa Prieto-Valdes** gets her fabulous, fully beaded gowns and feather jackets? Well, this is the place! Even top socialites of ultra chic Hong Kong society have their gowns custom made at the **New Yorker** and delivered at their doorstep via **Fedex.**

Lirag dispels rumors of being partial to the rich and says they are more than happy to accommodate everyone, regardless of name or social standing.

From prom gowns to wedding gowns, the **New Yorker** lives by its credo of "value, craftsmanship and service" and never fails to deliver breathtaking pieces.

Recently, they launched a ready-to-wear, vintage-inspired line of romantic lace blouses, hand-painted silk blousons, feminine dresses, velvet corsages and intricate beaded belts. Absolute must-haves for any true-blue fashionista!

An outing at the **New Yorker** is never complete without a visit to their 'Inspiration Room'. It's like stepping into a page of history with its display of antique jewelry and elegant headpieces. There's a walk-in closet of vintage creations and a catalogue of couture clothes of the past decades. Clients may pick the gown of their dreams and have it replicated or even updated. This is what the
New Yorker is famous for -- workmanship. Whether it's a gown with intricate beadwork or simply a dreamy lace creation, prepare to be impressed.

So start spreading the news.

New Yorker is located at 1004 Arnaiz Ave., Makati City. Tel. 844-7753
Store Hours: Mon-Sat 10 a.m.- 6 p.m.

notes worthy

(L-R): Notepad, P70; Notebook, P140.

Jot down to-do lists or memos to self on Rina Albert's stationery collection. Keeping your resolutions will be easier when written on oh-so-pretty paper.

RINA ALBERT
Illustrator / Designer

Signature style: Very feminine and chic. Usually fluid images done with watercolors.
Inspiration: Random things I see when I'm shopping or paging through a magazine, and places I've visited in Europe
Where to find her: All **Powerbooks** branches, **Essenses** at Rustan's Makati, to order email her at katharine_albert@hotmail.com
How much: Prices dependent on artwork

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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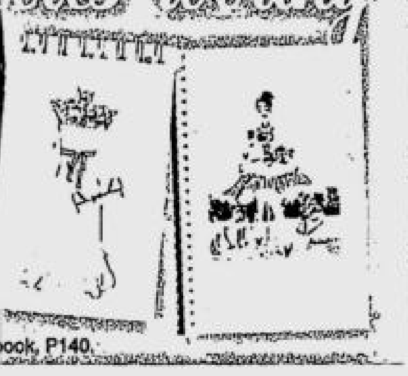
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Where to find her: All **Powerbooks** branches, **Essenses** at Rustan's Makati, to order email her at katharine_albert@hotmail.com
How much: Prices dependent on artwork

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DESIGNER FEATURE

Photography **DIX**
Hair and Makeup **GIGI GONZALEZ**
HOUSE OF LAUREL jacket, price available upon request
Get Happy is available at Firma, Rustan's, House of Laurel

Lucky Charms

Fusing her passions for design and marketing, Happy David is the girl wunderkind of accessories.

by Larry Leviste

[illegible]

I grew up tinkering with colors and shapes at my mom's cross-stitch and crafts store, so I had always considered arts and crafts to be very intriguing. I was in high school when I sold my first collection of 20 pieces. I graduated with a degree in Management, but the urge to create just kept surfacing.

[illegible]

During my first CITEM visit, I went crazy over the many booths that sold incredible pieces for export. Unfortunately, I was not being allowed to buy anything. It inspired me to start my own line of **Get Happy** accessories; I chose an arresting and unpredictable approach.

[illegible]

I make sure my price points are competitive. I teach my customers how to mix, not match. I derive personal satisfaction from a design discipline that caters to the individualistic Filipino dresser with a taste for my one-of-a-kind pieces. Accessories can make or break an outfit.

Inspired by artworks of Gustav Klimt and Onib Olmedo, as well as Indian culture and ancient Orientalia, my new collection of bohemian luxe trends is all about Mother Earth. Materials are shell, coco, wood, seeds in gumball sizes strung with glam accents like satin ribbon or mixed with roughly cut, semi-precious stones. Think long, layered silhouettes like earrings that brush the shoulders or multi-strand necklaces. Metallic will still be in but with brushed, burnished, antique finishes. Standout pieces with kitsch in mind are charms, animal lockets, and of course, nature shapes like leaves, vines and flora.

STYLE PHILES

Shoppers Plight

Style luminaries list their New Year shopping resolutions starting with a master plan as simple as dressing up: Stick to the basics. Accessorize. Edit, edit, edit your existing wardrobe.

(Photo courtesy of Tom Epperson)

[illegible]

1. Buy only one Prada item at a time.
2. Hoard accessories. You'll never know when they will be of use.
3. Invest in at least three pairs of all-white sneakers.
4. Seek hard-to-find craftsmen hiding in bazaars. They make great friends and will end up giving you stuff for free -- if they like you.
5. Always be on the look out for people -- not just great buys -- while shopping. You'll never know who you'll meet.
6. It's best to shop alone so you don't bug anyone. Unless you're one of those who need a second opinion all the time.
7. Blow it, but don't blow all of it. It's OK to splurge -- sometimes. Bear in mind your responsibilities, or your dad's or boyfriend's credit limit.
8. Lastly, shop with love. It's the only way to go.

[illegible]

For 2005 I want to be a better bargain hunter. I have a knack for great finds, I end up buying so much I don't get to use everything. I want to focus on pieces which will give me a lot of mileage. I also want to get key investment pieces. That **Hermes** I've been dreaming of will definitely be MINE.

[illegible]

My resolution is to buy quality over quantity. It's simple, yet so difficult to accomplish, if you have neither the budget nor the will power to resist impulse buys.

[illegible]

1. Life's short, so I'll buy what I love (though not necessarily a practical or branded purchase).
2. I will focus on engaging, interesting objects instead of trendy items.
3. I will enjoy all my purchases to the fullest.

Rorie Carlos
Fashion Editor, Preview Magazine

To buy more cool exercise togs (**Aura Athletica** and **Adidas by Stella McCartney**) so I'll be inspired to work out for more than six sessions.

PICAL PUNCH

nd ...oral beckon days of sunshine. Keep the look of perfect union of light and water. These cool new collection will definitely bring a bright, fresh New

On Rissa: **HYDRO-POWER EYE SHADOW** in Tiger Eye H3, Aqua Shimmer H5, and White Lights H2, **PERFECTING LIPSTICK** in Salmon Rose P18, **LIP GLOSS** in Red Coral G13, prices available upon request, all from **SHISEIDO THE MAKEUP** collection; **D>TOUR** top, P695; **CMG** earrings, P229.

Haute Tresses

Revitalize in state-of-the-art hair care with the most advanced technology today, created at a sleek environment in society's plush spot at 6750 Ayala Avenue. **Kérastase Institute by Salon Esa** offers a scientifically personalized Kérastase Ritual for every client using a diagnosis machine that magnifies and analyzes hair and scalp conditions. This lush institute offers an escape from the busy streets of the metropolis to a tranquil haven that helps stimulate even your anima – renew with ambient music of modern lounge / chill-out styles by international label Stefano Cecchi Records made exclusively for Kérastase. And regenerate with fragrances customized by renowned Italian perfume creator Laura Tonatto, that conveys the elegant energy and refined character that is special to the Institute.

Natural Wonders

Made from all-organic ingredients and infused with therapeutic scents, these handmade treatments do wonders for the spirit. Unwind with **Indie Art**'s earthy gifts of tropical treats.

Massage oils with raffia pouch in Sweet Almond + Brazilian Orange, P395, in Traditional Lulur, P235.
To order call Marge Manalaysay at 0917-8578139.

Sensual Scents

Fall in love with three new fragrances that exalt femininity. Be passionate, get sensual, but don't break your heart.

DAVIDOFF ECHO WOMAN EAU DE PARFUM, 50ml., P3,850. **CALVIN KLEIN ETERNITY MOMENT EAU DE PARFUM**, 50 ml., P3,850. **BVLGARI BLV NOTTE POUR FEMME**, 40 ml., P3,798. All available at **RUSTAN'S**

DIRECTORY

ARANAZ MANILA 2nd level City Golf Plaza, Julia Vargas St., Pasig. **BABO** Hip 2nd level Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **BAYO** Glorietta 2 Ayala Center, 2nd level Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **CARBON** Greenbelt 3 Ayala Center, 2nd level Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **CK CALVIN KLEIN** Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **CMG** 2nd floor Glorietta 4 Ayala Center, Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **DETAILS TRADING** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **D>TOUR** Hip 2nd level Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **HOUSE OF LAUREL** 6013 Villena St., Brgy. Poblacion, Makati. **INDIE ART** Marge Manalaysay 0917-8578139. **JANYLIN** Glorietta 1 Ayala Center, Hip 2nd level Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **JESSICA** Greenbelt 3 Ayala Center. **KERASTASE INSTITUTE BY SALON ESA** 6750 Retail Arcade 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati. **LILY** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **MARION GODART** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **MICO** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **MY BEAUTY HUB** 6750 Retail Arcade 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati 725-7937. **NEW YORKER** 1004 Arnaiz Ave., Makati 844-7753. **NOTHING BUT WATER** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **NULLAH** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **OFFICINE** Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **PRETTY FIT** Glorietta 3 Ayala Center, 2nd floor Hip Row Alabang Town Center. **PREVIEW** Hip 2nd level Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **RUSTAN'S** Ayala Center Makati, Alabang Town Center, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. **SHISEIDO** 2nd floor Glorietta 3 Ayala Center, Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **SOLE & CO.** 2nd level Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell. **THE RED JASPER** Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell Power Plant Mall Rockwell.

BIANCA FERNANDEZ 0918-4640589. **CIARA CREATES** available at SOUK GALLERY 2nd floor The Crescent 21, San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig, ISHQ Astoria Plaza, Escriva Dr., Ortigas Center, Pasig; 0918-9220795. **DIX** 0917-5219887/8994653. **EMBASSY** The Fort, Global City, Taguig 816-4195. **GET HAPPY** available at FIRMA Greenbelt 3 Ayala Center, RUSTAN'S Makati, HOUSE OF LAUREL 6013 Villena St., Brgy. Poblacion, Makati; gethappynow@gmail.com. **GIGI GONZALEZ** 0917-5314444. **KRIST BANSUELO** 0918-9058941. **KEN PAGASPAS** 0920-2918895. **LEAH GUNDRAN** 0917-8236451. **PMAP** 0917-5217627. **RINA ALBERT** katharine_albert@hotmail.com. **ROLLY ADUCA** 0920-2863343. **ROMAN GRAVADOR** 0917-3968250. **TOM EPPERSON** 890-3621. **WYNN WYNN ONG** available at FIRMA Greenbelt 3 Ayala Center.

Bianca Araneta

An Epiphany

Celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany, model and VJ Bianca Araneta reveals her shopping resolutions and choice selections.

Photography **TOM EPPERSON**
Styling **JENNI EPPERSON**
Hair and Makeup **KRIST BANSUELO**
WYNN WYNN ONG necklace, price available upon request
Diane Von Furstenberg dress, P21,500, **RUSTAN'S**

Shopping epiphany

Better judgment comes the day after. If you're contemplating on whether or not to purchase an item, sleep on it! If it's still on your mind the next day, buy it!

Top 3 shopping resolutions

Buy only what you need. Do not give in to your impulses.
While in "retail" therapy, leave your credit card at home.
Avoid temptation. Enter a mall with something specifiic in mind -- this does not include window shopping.

Beauty vices to break

Ignoring my hairbrush
Sleeping late

Fashion mishaps to avoid

Following trends just for the heck of it, even if they don't suit you
Wearing nipple tape under a black top that changes into a see-through under the flash bulbs
NOT wearing nipple tape under a black top that changes into a see-through under the flash bulbs
Visible panty lines

Meaningful shopper or senseless spender?

Meaningful shopper because I've learned to curb my spendthrift ways. Why, I've even started paying my own bills!

Well-grounded shopper or disillusioned spender?

Well- grounded. I can't afford the price of being disillusioned.

Lie awake in credit card debt or rest easy in cold cash purchases?

Unless I'm traveling, I keep my hands off my credit card. I base my spending sprees on the thickness of my wallet. I don't like to be surprised with a credit card statement at the end of the month.

Smart savvy investor or fanciful bargain junkie?

When it comes to fashion, I invest in classic pieces that I can wear forever. When it comes to gadgets and *techie* stuff like cameras and computers, I buy the best but always within my budget. It all boils down to priorities. Some women buy expensive shoes and bags without a care. Me? I tend to think of what gadget I can buy with that kind of money!

Year 2005 must-haves?

Defined sense of style (or at least the willingness to find one!)
Discerning eye for fashion
Plane ticket to an exotic destination
Positive outlook
New PowerMac G5!

An epiphany will...

enlighten you now and again.

But will never...

be recognized by a closed mind.

Present coupon and get

10 % DISCOUNT

On all services!

Valid only at

3rd floor, Market! Market!

Extended Until March 31, 2005

Not valid with other promo

Body Tune The Traditional Thai Massage

Present coupon and get

10 % DISCOUNT

On all services!

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